



NATIONAL
GEOGRAPHIC

TASTES OF TOKYO

ICELAND ADVENTURES

TRAVELER

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APRIL/MAY 2016

How to See the World in a Lifetime

7 TRIPS • 7 CONTINENTS • 7 DECADES



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A Grand Adventure Awaits

While our world may be more interconnected than ever, families are still craving opportunities to spend time together. Today grandparents are discovering a simple solution to connect with their grandchildren.



Adventures for Grandkids and Kids at Heart

Experience the magic of *Walt Disney World*® Resort with your grandkids! Whether you're sharing your favorites from past trips, or creating new memories together during your first trip, adventure awaits. A balance of updated popular attractions and new features means there's something for everyone. Buckle up for adventure and ride the family coaster *Seven Dwarfs Mine Train*® Attraction in *Fantasyland*® Area at *Magic Kingdom*® Park. Don't miss the *Disney Festival of Fantasy Parade*, and, of course, *It's a Small World*® Attraction. The *Wishes Nighttime Spectacular Show*, *Pirates of the Caribbean*® Attraction, and the classic *Haunted Mansion*® Attraction are other musts.

Epcot® World Showcase is the place for families to explore 11 countries, and *Disney's Animal Kingdom*® Theme Park offers the *Kilimanjaro Safari*® Expedition, *Dinoland U.S.A.*® Area, and the *Festival of the Lion King Show*. *Toy Story Mania*® Attraction in *Disney's Hollywood Studios*® pits grandparents against grandchildren in friendly games.

Families can make a splash at *Disney's Blizzard Beach Water Park* and *Disney's Typhoon Lagoon Water Park*. *Teamboat Springs Raft Ride* is an adventure that families can embark on together at *Disney's Blizzard Beach Water Park*. At either of the *Walt Disney World*® Resort water parks, grandparents can take the youngest grandkids to play areas designed especially for little ones, and the scenic lazy rivers are perfect for all.

Eat, Sleep, Play

Character dining brings even more fun to the table at mealtime. Chef Mickey's and Cinderella's Royal Table at *Cinderella Castle* are just two of the many entertaining immersive dining experiences. *Walt Disney World*® Resort hotels are well appointed to accommodate the entire family. Family suites at *Disney's Art of Animation Resort* feature three separate sleeping areas, two bathrooms, and kitchenettes. My Disney Experience offers planning and customization tools to better help families enjoy their stay and provides popular features such as *Disney FastPass+* to optimize your time.

Introduce your grandkids to your favorite theme park at the *Walt Disney World*® Resort. Visit Disneyworld.com/grandadventure to plan your next visit.



The GRAND ADVENTURE

**GRANDMA AND I
SCREAMED LIKE BABIES
AND WE DIDN'T CARE
WHO HEARD US.**

When grandparents and grandchildren
get together magical moments happen.

So enjoy the family adventure of a
lifetime in the grandest of style.

WALT DISNEY WORLD®

disneyworld.com/grandadventure

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FOLLOW NATGEOTRAVEL



VOLUME 33, NUMBER 2



This teahouse in Sarajevo serves up traditional teas with cookies and Turkish delight, page 60.

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Varanasi in Living Color

In India's holy haven, commotion and the divine intertwine. Pilgrims come to the Ganges, the country's sacred river, to worship and wash away sins, and visitors will find that spirituality courses through the soul of this ancient city.

BY PIERS MOORE EDE

47

See the World in a Lifetime

Seven trips, seven continents, seven decades. We'll take you from zero to seventy and beyond, whether it's a road trip through the United States' Southwest with a kindergartner, a European city crawl perfect for twentysomethings, or an epic Antarctic adventure for folks who think they've seen it all.

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World Legacy Awards

Not every tourism enterprise can call itself sustainable, but these five winners of our annual World Legacy Awards not only earned the top ecotourism titles; they raised the globe's cultural and green-travel standards.

BY COSTAS CHRIST



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Editor's Note

IN TRAVEL, AS
IN LIFE, IT'S THE
CONNECTIONS
THAT COUNT.



Highlights Across National Geographic

@NATGEOTRAVEL

Congrats to Karla Cyr, winner of our #NatGeoWanderListContest! For daily travel inspiration, follow @NatGeoTravel on Pinterest.

NAT GEO CHANNEL

On April 3, the National Geographic Channel premieres *The Story of God*, hosted by Morgan Freeman. Tune in as his search to understand spirituality takes him across the globe.

BOOKAZINE

The new *100 Places That Will Change Your Life* dives into destinations that nurture your mind, body, spirit, and soul. Find it on newsstands now.

BIOBLITZ

National Geographic's annual BioBlitz, which inventories living plants and creatures, goes countrywide for the first time. Centered in Washington, D.C., on May 20 and 21, the free community event will also take place in more than 100 national parks across America. To register, visit natgeo.com/bioblitz.

NEW BOOK

Check out *Great American Eating Experiences*, featuring must-try fare around the United States, from multilayered Smith Island cake in Maryland to tapas-style Korean food in L.A. Order it at shop.nationalgeographic.com.

NAT GEO BEE

Watch map-minded kids test their knowledge in the annual National Geographic Bee in Washington, D.C., May 22-25. Find out airing information and more at natgeo.com/geobee.

Let me tell you a story. Eighteen years ago, the editor of this magazine, the late Keith Bellows, gave me a life-changing opportunity: a chance to work at *Traveler*. But first, he said, "go travel." I returned a few months later from Asia, sunbaked and somewhat wiser, eager to contribute to National Geographic's abiding mission of encouraging people to explore the world. Now, I return again—this time from Singapore, where I have lived for the past three years—to follow in the footsteps of my mentor and friend and to rally readers to embrace travel as a tool for personal growth and global engagement.

In travel, as in life, it's the connections that count. Connections are stories waiting to be told, stories that help us make sense of where we've been, where we're going, and what

matters most. In this issue's feature "How to See the World in a Lifetime," we celebrate connections across generations and cultures, psychologies and geographies. We take seven trips to seven continents, from the American Southwest to Australia to Antarctica, to prove travel's transformative power is both timeless and strengthened over time.

At National Geographic, we believe that everyone is an explorer. We also have a hunch that memorable stories are the treasures of a life well lived. I'm thankful to have encountered a storyteller who encouraged me to travel, and I'm proud to build on our heritage of connections. Thank you for being a traveler and for taking this journey with us.

GEORGE W. STONE
Editor in Chief

When the stakes

couldn't be higher

SUPPORT MATTERS

Jimmy Chin has photographed and filmed at some of the world's most extreme locations. The stakes are high whether he's at the top of Mount Everest or in the dunes of the Sahara. That's why Jimmy and thousands of other professionals trust Canon service and support for comprehensive maintenance, expedited repairs and expert technical support needed to always be Canon Ready.

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Celebrate with the Irish:

Festival Time in Ireland



Ireland loves to celebrate, in hundreds of festivals throughout the year. Come kick up your heels, rub shoulders with the locals, feel the love of all things Gaelic. Arts, music, and literature are happening in towns and villages throughout the country. Here's a sampling of festivals, great for the whole family.

Galway International Arts Festival

July 11-24, 2016

Galway, County Galway

giaf.ie

Ireland's largest arts festival features over 500 writers, artists, performers and musicians from all over the world and, of course, Ireland. It embraces theater, spectacle, dance, visual arts, and more. Guests have included David Byrne, Philip Glass, and Joni Mitchell.

Féile an Phobail

Aug. 1-14, 2016

Belfast, Northern Ireland

feilebelfast.com

Concerts, exhibitions, debates, and street performances celebrate community togetherness in West Belfast.

Fleadh Cheoil

Aug. 14-22, 2016

Ennis, County Clare

fleadhcheoil.ie

The granddaddy of traditional music festivals, this showcase of Irish song and dance will have you tapping your toes to fiddles and flutes all day and night.

Dublin Theatre Festival

Sept. 29-Oct. 10, 2016

Dublin, County Dublin

dublintheatrefestival.com

In a country that has produced the likes of Oscar Wilde, George Bernard Shaw, and Samuel Beckett, this is the premier theater event of the year, featuring top plays from Ireland and beyond.

Belfast International Arts Festival

Oct. 11-30, 2016

Belfast, Northern Ireland

belfastinternationalartsfestival.com

Belfast puts on a provocative, irresistible medley of multimedia and cross-disciplinary events, with music, dance, art, and "sociopolitical invectives."

Wexford Opera Festival

Oct. 26-Nov. 6, 2016

Wexford, County Wexford

wexfordopera.com

See and hear forgotten classics of opera. On the southeast coast, this 64-year-old festival dusts off old masterpieces and gives them new life.

Guinness Cork Jazz Festival

Oct. 28-31, 2016

Cork, County Cork

guinnessjazzfestival.com

World-class jazz is on tap in some 80 venues, featuring thousands of musicians from more than 80 countries. Past performers have included Ella Fitzgerald, Dave Brubeck, Wynton Marsalis, and Buddy Rich.

Kerrygold Ballymaloe Literary Festival of Food & Wine

May 20-22, 2016

Ballymaloe, County Cork

litfest.ie

Come to County Cork for a food-filled weekend of workshops, discussions, and parties. Foodies serious and curious meet and share ideas.

Listowel Writers Week

June 1-5, 2016

Listowel, County Kerry

writersweek.ie

Meet authors and readers in this foundry of literary talent. Events for adults and children include workshops, book launches, readings, and seminars.

Cat Laughs Comedy Festival

June 2-6, 2016

Kilkenny, County Kilkenny

thecatlaughs.com

The medieval town of Kilkenny gets crazy funny on a bank holiday weekend, with the best of Irish and international comedy acts and 30,000 visitors.

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stories that unfold on the
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the enchantments of Ireland's
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the poetic and the astonishing,
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Cover Story



BEHIND THE LENS

Worldly Romance

*A husband and wife take us
around the globe.*



WHEREVER NATALY OSMANN LEADS, Murad Osmann follows. And so do more than four million Instagrammers, who track the Russian couple's travels in their #FollowMeTo series.

Our cover stars for this issue created their signature hand-holding shot during their first trip together to Barcelona, Spain, in 2012. "Nataly was keen on seeing everything from the mountain of Tibidabo to the Sagrada Família. I was just keen on taking photos," says Murad. "At one point, I wanted to take a photo of Nataly, but she got shy and turned around, grabbing my arm and dragging me forward. As you can see, that didn't stop me from taking the picture."

Since then, Nataly's led the way, whether it's through Italy or India, Bali or Brazil. "There are some countries that you fall in love with at the first sight. We were absolutely blown away by Jordan. It's like a small heaven that offers so many beautiful destinations for travelers who like to explore."

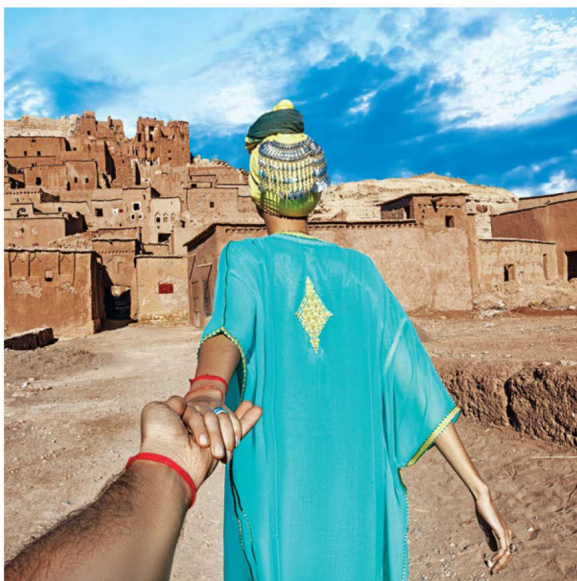
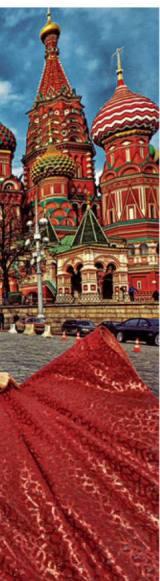
In June 2015, they brought their #FollowMeTo project much closer to home—to their weddings in Moscow and the Russian republic of Dagestan, Murad's native turf.

📱 @muradosmann, @natalyosmann, and @followmetraveller

Top: Ait-Ben-Haddou, Morocco. Opposite page, from top row left: Paris; the couple's wedding in Moscow; Los Angeles; Hong Kong; Varanasi, India; ancient Sigiriya ruins in Sri Lanka; the Kremlin in Moscow; Ait-Ben-Haddou, Morocco; New York's Brooklyn Bridge



SERGEY GANNOTSKIY (PHOTOGRAPHER), ANTON ZEMLYANOV/CLAMOUR RUSSIA (TUXEDO), PHOTO ILLUSTRATIONS BY MURAD OSMANN (PHOTO GRID)



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Contributors



PHOTOGRAPHER

Akos Stiller

"Europe in Your Twenties,"
page 60

This Budapest photographer's favorite Hungarian street food? *Lángos*, a deep-fried flatbread topped with sour cream and grated cheese. Stiller recommends sampling the unofficial national dish at Karaván, the city's new street food court. "During the summer I have it at least once a week—I am a *lángos* addict. Try it with a little bit of garlic sauce if you don't have a date that day."

@stillerakos



WRITER

Elizabeth Lonsdorf

"Africa in Your Fifties,"
page 80

A primatologist who studies the great apes, Lonsdorf teaches her animal behavior students at Pennsylvania's Franklin & Marshall College about many other creatures as well. "My students come into class with a limited knowledge of charismatic megafauna such as wolves and elephants, then leave at the end of the semester thinking that mantis shrimp and dung beetles are the coolest things in the world."



WRITER

Nina Strohlic

"Europe in Your Twenties,"
page 60

When this *National Geographic* magazine writer and editor first traveled to central and eastern Europe, she expected to find a region struggling to emerge. Instead, she found cosmopolitan cities. "When the curtain was lifted from these countries that spent decades under communist repression, art, music, and nightlife rushed back in. There's a real embrace of life you can feel."

@NinaStrohlic



EXPLORER

Sven-Olof Lindblad

"Antarctica in Your Sixties,"
page 84

Lindblad has deep ties in the coldest continent: His father took the first tourists to Antarctica 50 years ago. Now, Lindblad Expeditions, together with National Geographic, helps travelers navigate the remote landmass with environmental experts and photographers on hand.

Lindblad is comfortable around a camera, too—he's been published in *National Geographic* and *Smithsonian*.

@solindblad



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Sunset on the Mission Mountains near Ronan, MT





The sky's the limit.

They came to Montana hoping to see mountains and wildlife, to enjoy friendly locals and small-town charm. But when sisters Gale and Laura Straub hit the open road, they also found a rekindled connection with each other. On the first day of their Montana road trip, they woke up to this view of the Mission Mountains. And it only got better from there. What will you discover in Big Sky Country?



*See Gale and Laura's story, and what awaits you, at **VISITMT.COM**.*

MONTANA

Dinosaur eggs and a buffalo jump: why your Montana road trip should include more than Glacier and Yellowstone.



CENTRAL MONTANA

Central Montana is home to some of the best trout rivers in the country, including the blue-ribbon rated **Missouri River** **1**. So while part of the family is busy fly-fishing, others can swim or take in the scenery from a stand up paddleboard. Every great family vacation needs an activity everyone can enjoy - **First Peoples Buffalo Jump State Park** **2** is the perfect destination. An archaeological site believed to be the largest bison cliff jump in North America, the 6,000 square foot center offers buffalo culture exhibits, a storytelling circle, a gallery, a bookstore and impressive views of the jump site.

CentralMontana.com

MONTANA'S MISSOURI RIVER COUNTRY

The draw of the West has inspired countless pioneers to head for Montana. Today, you can discover the same unspoiled nature that greeted these early settlers. Visiting Montana's Missouri River Country is like stepping into the past in all the best ways. The meandering Missouri River was a historic siren call to wildlife, pioneers and outlaws. Today the outlaws are gone, but you'll still find the seductive charm of nature, especially when visiting the **Charles M. Russell National Wildlife Refuge** **3**.

MissouriRiver.VisitMT.com

2



1



3





4

HELENA

As the state capital, Helena has managed to become a modern city while retaining the charm of its early years. With more than 75 miles of trails for hiking and biking, there's plenty of adventure within the city limits - ideal for active families. Take a boat tour through the **Gates of the Mountains** 4 to follow Lewis and Clark's famous path through the area, exploring incredible scenery, cliff drawings and wildlife. But there's more than just fun in the sun, as Helena offers some of the best nightlife in the state. Check out the tasting rooms at Blackfoot River Brewing, Lewis & Clark Brewing Company and Triple Divide Spirits Distillery.

HelenaMT.com



5

SHELBY

Home of the world heavyweight boxing championship fight of 1923, Shelby is full of surprises. Along the beautiful Marias River, a breathtaking public 18-hole championship golf course rewards adventurous road-trippers headed from **Glacier National Park** 5 toward Great Falls. Several American Indian tribes have counted the nearby Sweet Grass Hills as sacred over the past few centuries, and the view of these alone is worth the drive. While you're in town, enjoy 5.6 miles of scenic walking/biking trails, and look out for the 75th annual Marias Fair in mid-July.

ShelbyMTchamber.org



6

GREAT FALLS

Great Falls has a lot to offer visitors of all ages. There are more museums per capita than in any other city in the state, and once a year, it becomes the Western Art Capital of the World. After taking in some culture, it's time to get outside. Fortunately, there's plenty to see and do, from visiting **North America's Largest Buffalo Jump** 2 to marveling at the world's shortest river (the Roe River flows just 200 feet) to hiking or biking some of the **57 miles of trails** 6 that are accessible from the heart of the city. There's no shortage of activities in one of Montana's most popular cities.

GenuineMontana.com

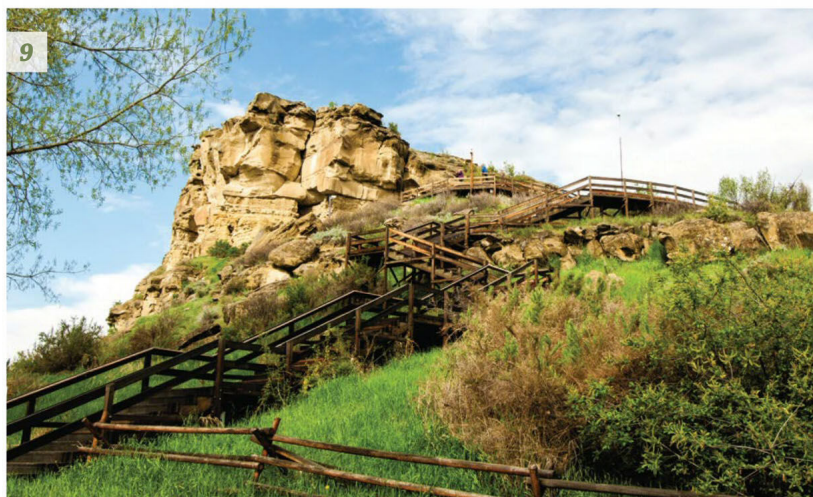
SOUTHEAST MONTANA

For those looking to get off the beaten path, Southeast Montana is as rich in history as it is in diversity. The interstate passes by several world-class lookouts and recreation areas, including **Bighorn Canyon National Recreation Area** ⁷ and Yellowtail Dam. Here you'll find 1,000 foot canyon walls, which make for spectacular sightseeing by both land and boat. If the kids get rowdy, there are 27 miles of winding trails ready to be discovered. Just make sure to bring a camera, as bighorn sheep, mule deer and even wild horses call this area home.

Often unexplored, but never underappreciated, are the petrified bridges leading across canyon walls that can be found on the Calypso Trail outside Terry, Montana. Less than an hour away, the **Miles City Bucking Horse Sale** ⁸ is where the West goes to rodeo. From bucking broncos to mutton busting (a contest where kids attempt to ride a sheep) to the sale of rough stock, it's a sight that must be seen to be believed. For those who love history, **Pompeys Pillar National Monument** ⁹ is home to the annual Clark Days Rendezvous in August as well as the famous signature of Captain William Clark that he carved into rock.

For the kids, **Makoshika State Park** ¹⁰ offers a front row seat to dinosaur fossils, including 75 million year old dinosaur eggs. And, if you're lucky, you may just discover your very own dinosaur fossil by exploring the surrounding landscape. Just make sure to inform a park official.

SoutheastMT.com



MONTANA The sky's the limit.

VARANASI, INDIA | CENTRAL AMERICA STAYS | HOTEL KEY CHAINS

Notebook

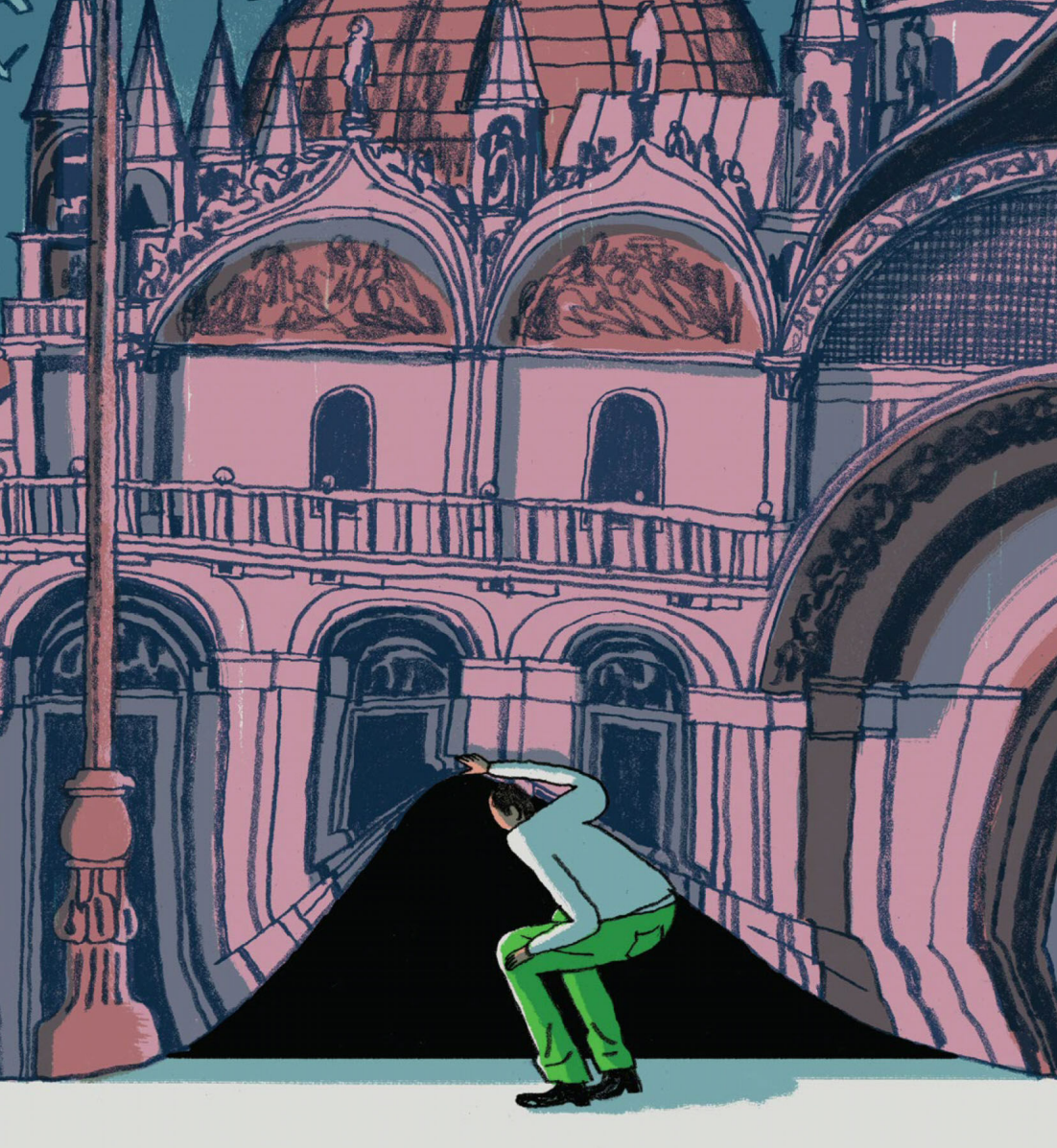
A JOURNAL FOR THE SMART TRAVELER

Get Lost on Purpose

How to travel to wherever
the wind takes you—instead of
where your GPS does

SEE WELLNESS





WELLNESS

Go Your Own Way

An offbeat guide for exploring the unknown

It happens to the best of us. We finally get a chance to book a trip—and end up in the same places as every other traveler. You stay where TripAdvisor tells you, eat where Zagat recommends, and Yelp your way through a vacation. Suddenly, you're visiting a checklist instead of a place.

Make no mistake: There's nothing wrong with wanting to see the wonders of the world or the UNESCO-designated sites, but they aren't the only reason to travel. For every city you've heard about, there's another waiting for you to discover it, but in a sea full of must-see lists, it can be difficult to uncover the smaller destination fish.

So how do you find those spots that will wow you without risking a vacation that disappoints? You prepare yourself to get lost. —HEATHER GREENWOOD DAVIS

Five tips to lead you happily astray

1. SEE THE NEIGHBORS

For every Rome, there's a Mantua. Instead of creating an itinerary based on the places that receive the most attention, seek out the destinations that seem to have been missed.

2. DITCH THE GPS

Your phone's mapping apps are precise locating tools, but travel should never just be about "getting there." Look at a paper map and see if there's a route that takes you through a bustling market or along a quiet shore. Give yourself permission to wander intentionally off course.

3. TALK TO STRANGERS

Find a hashtag that pinpoints your area of interest, and ask away. Fellow travelers will tell you where to go near Toronto, or recommend a home stay in Croatia or a guide they know in Beijing. Ask where the locals take vacations to score some insider information.

4. HOP ON

A train, subway, or bus will work. There is no better way to get to know some of the local vernacular than to blend in on a city commute.

5. BE OPEN TO THE JOURNEY

Getting lost isn't about being reckless or unsafe; it's about choosing a path that hasn't lost its allure. The key is to open yourself up to the possibility—and intention—of doing things differently. This is about succumbing to the true idea of travel: to explore.

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Picnic parties fill Ueno Park during cherry blossom season. Cherry trees bloom (bottom) from late March to early April.

SIGHTS AND BITES

FLOWER POWER

In Tokyo's Ueno Park, savor springtime cherry blossoms and local eats



The act of viewing cherry blossoms is so popular in Japan that it even has its own term: *hanami*. To see light pink bouquets for yourself, head to Ueno Park, an urban refuge in Tokyo's center that offers temples and pagodas, foliage and flowers, and a pond brimming with paddleboaters. More than 1,000 cherry trees line the landscape, blooming from late March to early April each year.

For activities beyond the blossoms, the park also includes Japan's oldest zoo; Tokyo's National Museum—which showcases historical treasures, ranging from kimonos and sacred scrolls to woodblock screens and shogun warriors' armor; and the National Museum of Nature and Science, featuring a 360-degree theater from the 2005 World Expo in Aichi, Japan. At the Shitamachi Museum, learn about daily life of the merchant class during the Edo era, the period right before Ueno Park was built, and for contemporary works, visit the Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum.

Though tourists flock to the area, visitors can still experience an authentic taste of Japan in surrounding dining options, from classic Japanese cuisine such as pub-like *izakayas* and sushi houses to panda-themed sweet spots.

► LEARN ABOUT MUST-TRY BITES AROUND TOKYO'S OTHER TOP SIGHTS, FROM THE SENSO-JI TEMPLE TO THE SKYTREE, AT NATGEOTRAVEL.COM.

LESLIE TAYLOR (PICNIC), NICK JACKSON/REX SHUTTERSTOCK/AP IMAGES (FLOWER)



Today's weather



Tomorrow's

Every time I take a flight, I am always mindful of
the many people who make a
successful journey possible.

Chief Albert Luthuli, Zulu Tribal Chief 1936-1967 (Durban)



YouTube

@dbntourism

Durban
SOUTH AFRICA



Ueno Park's Best Bites

CLASSIC Innshoutei

Serving Japanese fare for over a century, this rustic restaurant, located close to the zoo, is almost as old as Ueno Park itself. Sit on a *zabuton* (floor cushion) to dine on sashimi and sushi, accompanied by unlimited cups of green tea. Try the Tsuki Flower Lunch—Innshoutei's version of a bento box, packed in a woven bamboo basket.

TRENDY Café Hibiki

On the east side of the park near the National Museum of Western Art, this café offers a large patio for prime people-watching, as well as panda-themed buns and cakes that envelop both savory and sweet fillings.

Park Side Café

Refuel after conquering the cherry blossom crowds with pots of herbal teas, sandwiches, salads, and slices of chocolate cake.

UNEXPECTED Ameyoko

Exit the park on the southwest side to enter this open-air street market with more than 500 stalls—which sold illicit goods in the years following World War II—bursting with grab-and-go options such as fresh fruit shish kebabs or sheets of dried nori (seaweed).

Afterward, purchase packable treats like spices and bottled sauces.

Daitoryo

The locals call this type of restaurant an *izakaya*, or casual eating place. Sample relatively inexpensive plates of charcoal-grilled yakitori—chicken skewers—paired with Japanese beer or chilled sake.

■ DISCOVER SIGHTS
AND BITES IN MAUI,
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Old San Juan

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LOCAL COLOR

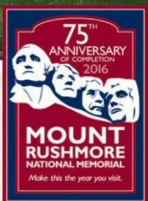
HERE'S THE KEY
TO YOUR ROOM

In the age of magnetic cards, hotel keys are an endangered species. Here are some of our favorites, proving hotels haven't completely closed the door on this travel tradition. **1.** Deep in the heart of Alpine, Texas, the Old West-style Maverick Inn is just a pony ride away from Big Bend National Park. **2.** Zanzibar's Diamonds Star of the East, off the coast of Tanzania, features 11 villas along the Indian Ocean.

3. A renovated Victorian manor in Worcestershire, England, Brockencote Hall keeps it old-school—its iron key chains are hand-forged by a local blacksmith. **4.** The Lake Kivu Serena Hotel in Gisenyi, Rwanda, pays a carved tribute to the simian mascot. **5.** The river that supplies Castello di Vicarello's pebble key fobs flows right by the Tuscan castle turned hotel. **6.** Fogo Island Inn, one of the National Geographic Unique Lodges of the World, offers sea spray views and sweet dreams on Canada's Atlantic coast. —HANNAH SHEINBERG



FIND YOUR
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South Dakota is home to American treasures like Mount Rushmore National Memorial and five other National Park Service units. From the Wild Frontier to the Old West to the peaks and rolling prairies, find your Great Place in South Dakota.

South Dakota
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The low-key charms of Panama's Al Natural Resort include beachside thatch-roofed bungalows.

CHECKING IN

Jungle Bookings

Get close to nature at these Central American lodges.

BOCAS DEL TORO, PANAMA

AL NATURAL RESORT

For the Beach Lounger The open-air bungalows at this Caribbean island lodge face the beach, with colorful woven hammocks that invite a siesta. Snorkel the Zapatillas Cays, only a short boat ride away through waters where dolphins play. The uninhabited, palm-studded islets are ringed with white sands and vibrant corals. Top off the day with a passion fruit daiquiri in the candlelit main lodge. From \$420 (for two-night minimum stay). alnaturalresort.com

LIMÓN, COSTA RICA

PACUARE LODGE

For the Thrill Seeker Arrival at Pacuare, one of National Geographic's Unique Lodges of the World, is by raft down the tumbling white water of the Pacuare River. Keep up the adrenaline by rappelling into narrow canyons and hiking along a traditional Cabecar Indian trail to a waterfall. Even dining is an adventure: Glide 400 feet down a cable for a meal at the Nest, a platform 60 feet high in the branches of a ceiba tree. From \$813 (three-day/two-night package). pacuarelodge.com

PETÉN, GUATEMALA

NITUN LODGE AND PRIVATE RESERVE

For the Culture Buff At this thatch-roofed lodge on the shores of Lake Petén Itzá, guests can choose from a variety of guided trips to nearby Maya ruins. Marvel at the soaring temples and palaces of Tikal, one of the archaeological wonders of the world, and then trek deep into the jungle to little-visited sites such as Uaxactún, where the Maya charted the equinox and the solstice, and Yaxchilán and Seibal, to study ancient rock carvings. From \$165. nitun.com



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YOUR SHOT

Home on the Range

A semi-nomadic family makes a rest stop in western China

Photographer Robert Lie's secret to capturing this pastoral image of a traveling Tajik family? Sharing goat milk and conversation.

"After I talked with them for a few hours in their yurt, my camera became invisible as they felt more comfortable with me," says Lie. Since their home has only one lamp, he found the right light when they ventured outside to the scenic surroundings of Tashkurgan, a former Silk Road hub that's now part of Xinjiang, China, near the borders of Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Tajikistan.

"It's the simple things in life that make us stop and look at how beautiful the world is, even in its nooks and crannies," says *Traveler's* director of photography, Anne Farrar. "The grasslands of Tashkurgan are one of the world's less traveled locations and can require a special permit to visit. Through the power of photography, Lie offers a glimpse of the unique Tajik lifestyle and teaches us that elegance can be found in many forms."

**SEE IT,
DO IT**

Want to sleep in a yurt? Journeys International and Old Road Tours offer overnight stays around Xinjiang.

WYOMING

AN ADVENTUROUS STATE OF MIND



Make no little plans, a wise man once said. Think about mighty mountains, wild rivers, rolling plains, a sky wider than your imagination. What better place to celebrate the national parks' centennial? Think big. Think Wyoming.

YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK

Preserving a spectacular piece of the American West, the world's first national park has thousands of steaming geysers, thundering waterfalls, steep canyons, and abundant wildlife that includes bison, bears, and moose. **Yellowstone** sprawls over two million acres of deep forests, intimate meadows, big lakes, and burbling rivers and streams. Here you can hike and explore to your heart's content. Every season has its own personality and color scheme. Stay in one of the park's historic landmarks, such as **Old Faithful Inn**, built of logs and stone in 1904, and featuring a 76-foot-tall fireplace.

GRAND TETON NATIONAL PARK

Like the mountain kingdom of a fantasy novel, the **Teton Range** shoots above the sagebrush floor of **Jackson Hole Valley** some 6,000 to 7,000 feet in gray spires and pinnacles. **Grand Teton National Park** preserves a vast swatch of scenic beauty that takes in wildflower meadows, alpine lakes, and plunging falls. The **Snake River** and more than 200 miles of trails wind through this heavenly landscape. Peaks reach up to 13,700 feet. This is a terrific place for outdoor enthusiasts of all abilities. Hiking, climbing, camping, and kayaking will create memories to carry with you your whole life.

NATIONAL MONUMENTS

America's first national monument, **Devils Tower** juts 1,200 feet from the surrounding prairie. The flat-topped, grooved upthrust of volcanic rock makes for a startling sight. It's easy to understand why this unusual geological phenomenon has drawn people from around the world and as far back as the early Native Americans. Eight miles of trails explore the area.

A 50-million-year-old classroom, **Fossil Butte National Monument** is one of the world's great mother lodes of fossils. Take a scenic drive, hike interpretive trails, and stop in the Visitors Center to view more than 300 fossils, including a 13-foot crocodile and an entire school of fish.



THE AIR IS THINNER, THE EXPERIENCE RICHER.

If adventure is your oxygen, Wyoming will make you feel more alive than ever. With world-famous National Parks, thousands of miles of trails, and breathtaking vistas awaiting every turn, it's not just your pulse that will be elevated.

*That's WY*TM

CODY—THE WILDEST WAY INTO YELLOWSTONE

Founded in 1896, Cody was given its name by a great Western character. Pony Express rider, scout, buffalo hunter, and Wild West showman, Buffalo Bill Cody helped found the town, then became one of its biggest investors and promoters. Cody is the eastern gateway to Yellowstone National Park and offers a variety of premier outdoor adventures. And, with a population under 10,000, it's the perfect base for lodging, dining and steeping yourself in Western culture.

You'll want to spend time at the world-famous Buffalo Bill Center of the West, which has five museums in one complex. Here you'll discover more about "Buffalo Bill," historic firearms, the area's natural history, great Western themed art, and the Plains Indians of yesterday and today. On the western edge of town, visit Old Trail Town, where weather-beaten pioneer cabins and storefronts tell the story of early Cody life. The place even includes the grave of Jeremiah Johnston. Downtown, stop in the Irma Hotel, a real beauty built by Buffalo Bill in 1902, named for his daughter, and still accommodating guests.

Adrenaline rushes abound in Cody Country—hiking, mountain biking, rock climbing, kayaking, horseback riding and river rafting. After an action packed day and relaxing meal at one of Cody's many unique restaurants, enjoy some cowboy music or the Cody Nite Rodeo, the longest running nightly rodeo in the country. Then, sit by the campfire at a guest ranch or enjoy the comforts of a plush upscale inn.

yellowstonecountry.org.



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Buffalo Bill's
CODY/YELLOWSTONE COUNTRY

THE WILDEST WAY INTO YELLOWSTONE.





TRACKS TO CHEYENNE

Relive the glory days in Wyoming's family-friendly capital. What started as a rowdy construction camp on the transcontinental railroad is now a prosperous Western city anchored by a spectacular domed state capitol.

Cheyenne today offers experiences as varied as trolley tours and trail rides, a cowboy dinner show and the world's largest rodeo. Be sure to check out the grand old **Union Pacific Railroad Depot**, the last of the grand 19th century depots remaining on the transcontinental railroad built in 1887. Photos and interactive

displays transport you to the era of westward expansion. Want to hop a train yourself? At **Terry Bison Ranch** you can ride through a herd of bison, 2,300 strong. These majestic symbols of the Old West roam on 30,000 acres of rolling hills and lush prairie grasslands. There's also horseback riding, fishing and other fun things for kids.

Not far away, **Curt Gowdy State Park** is set in the scenic foothills of the **Laramie Mountains**. Hike its timbered slopes, with views of granite towers. cheyenne.org.

CELEBRATE THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE CENTENNIAL IN WYOMING

This year, the National Park Service is celebrating its 100th anniversary. Ready to join the celebration? Start by planning your own visit to any one of Wyoming's national treasures. Here are a few events and ideas for inspiration:

Every Kid in a Park—4th graders and their families get free admission to Wyoming's 36 National Park Service sites, state parks, and the National Historic Trails Interpretive Center.

Treasures on the Big Screen—See Wyoming's national treasures at a theater near you in *America Wild: A National Parks Adventure*.

Lake Yellowstone Hotel 125th Anniversary—Book your stay early to join in the celebration at this historic landmark. The festivities are set for May 13, 2016.

Gardiner Gateway Project—This special project is a partnership between local, state, and federal agencies to restore and enhance the original entrance to Yellowstone. Visit the project website for additional information on updates and public events to be held in August around the unveiling.

Centennial Celebration—August 25, 2016. Look for updates in our events calendar for happenings around the state. travelwyoming.com/events

Don't forget to join the social conversation by using the **#FindYourPark** hashtag to share your Wyoming adventures and follow others.

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A puffin enjoys a view of Iceland's Dyrhólaey peninsula.

NAT GEO EXPEDITIONS

Hot Spots in Iceland

Three itineraries that explore this Nordic island nation

CHARTED TERRITORIES

FOR THE SURF AND TURF FAN

The Iceland by Land & Sea coastal trip starts off at the world's northernmost capital, Reykjavík, with a backdrop of Mount Esja and the city harbor. After two days of land activities, board the 81-cabin *National Geographic Explorer* and head up the west coast for walks and Zodiac cruises on striking Flatey Island and to take in the Hornstrandir peninsula's pristine wilderness. The on-board photo expert can help you snap shots of native birds and seal-strewn beaches. *Seven days.*

CULTURAL CHILD'S PLAY

FOR THE CURIOUS KID

In folklore-rich Iceland, tales of pirates, elves, and sea monsters abound. And the natural setting for these myths doesn't disappoint. During the Iceland Family Expedition, spelunk into lava-formed caves, ride an Icelandic horse, and take a private tour around a volcano museum. Younger participants get a taste of life abroad when they meet their local pen pals, with whom they're connected before the trip, for a day of indoor climbing and traditional games. *Nine days.*

THE ICEBERG'S THE LIMIT

FOR THE ACTIVE ADVENTURER

Kick off your Journeys Explore Iceland tour with an introduction to the country's hot and cold elements by gawking at the tower of scorching water shooting upward from the Strokkur geyser around every 10 minutes, and the 100-foot cascade coming down the Gullfoss waterfall. Take a drive past lava fields and 90-foot-tall icebergs, and as the trip winds down, cool off by donning crampons to hike in the shadow of Vatnajökull glacier, Iceland's largest ice cap. *Seven days.*



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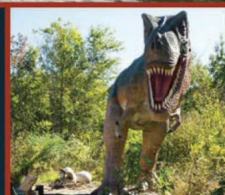
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1. CAPITOL HILL / NATIONAL MALL
From historic homes near the Supreme Court to Eastern Market eateries, D.C.'s front yard comes alive in April, thanks to cherry blossoms around the Tidal Basin.

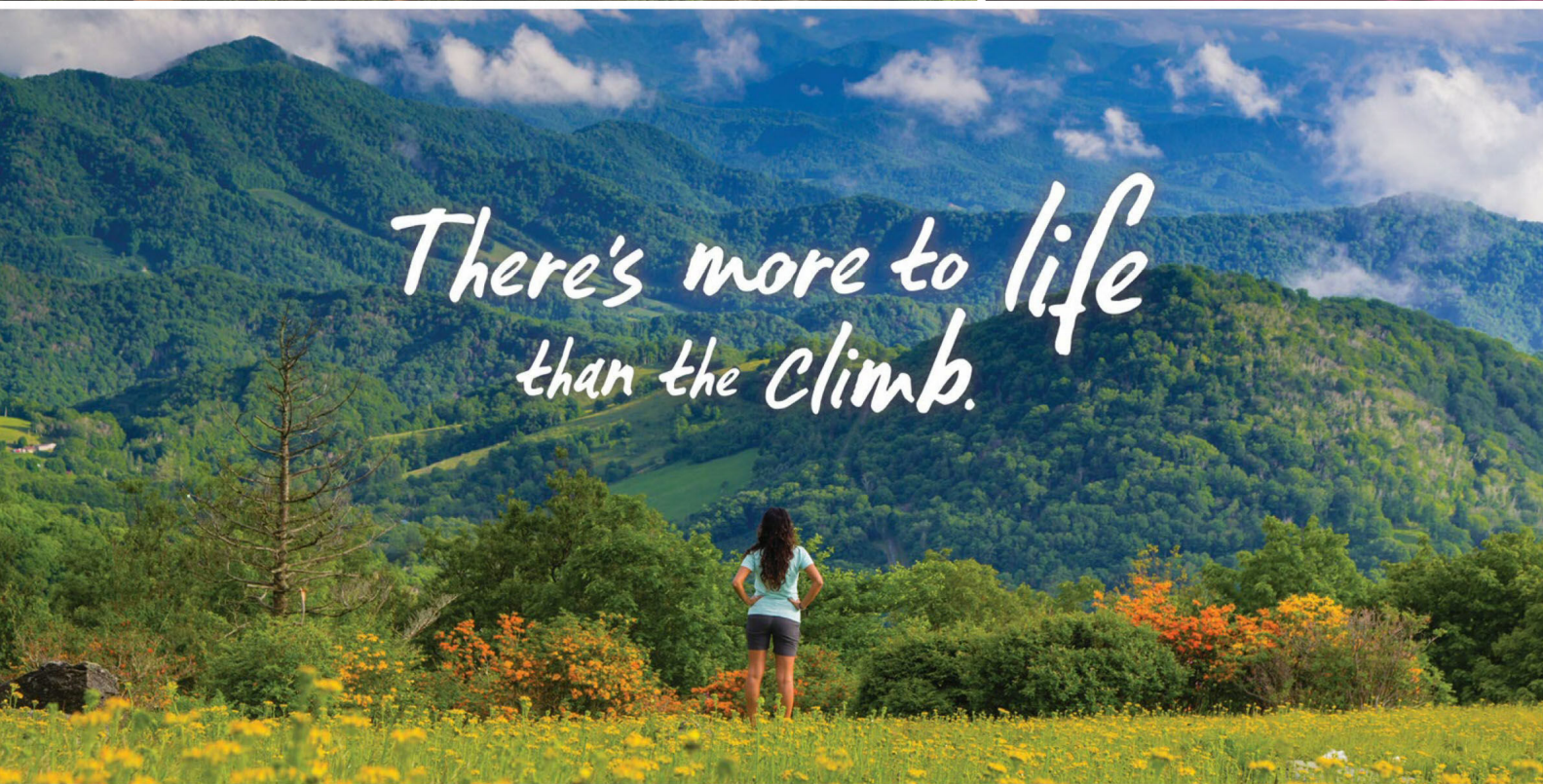
2. PENN QUARTER / CITY CENTER
When Momofuku, Hermès, and DBGB Kitchen and Bar moved into CityCenterDC, this formerly drab area near Chinatown kicked up the capital's fab quotient.

3. GEORGETOWN / FOGGY BOTTOM
Georgian row houses and the gilded gates of Dumbarton Oaks define this storied spot. Skip the line at Georgetown Cupcake for sugary treats at Baked & Wired.

4. 14TH STREET / U STREET
Combines classic D.C. cool (think Duke and Marvin) with what's current, in cafés and concept restaurants. Busboys and Poets offers free-range grub and poetry readings.

5. H STREET / NOMA
A new streetcar line brings accessibility to the area, connecting visitors with cocktail hub Copycat Co., dim sum space Maketto, and other up-and-coming spots.

Bonus:
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A suspension bridge
on Nepal's Annapurna
Circuit. Remnants of
a statue (bottom)
in Kathmandu



ADVENTURE

HIGH TIME FOR NEPAL

*The Himalayan nation is ready
for travelers to return*



If the devastating April 2015 earthquake dashed your dreams of visiting Nepal, think again. This mountainous country is welcoming tourists back, hoping to climb to its pre-quake number of 800,000 annual visitors. From shrines to summits, here's where to go on the top of the world.

SOAK UP CULTURE The Kathmandu Valley, home to the ancient cities of Kathmandu, Patan, and Bhaktapur, features seven UNESCO World Heritage sites squeezed into an area smaller than Manhattan. The Nepali capital is a colorful jumble of ornate temples, carved wooden Newari (native Kathmandu) architecture, and chaotic streets. Some monuments are still under repair, but their rich histories remain.

GO ON SAFARI The subtropics of southern Nepal cradle Chitwan National Park, a UNESCO World Heritage site with 68 mammal species, 544 birds, and 56 reptiles and amphibians. Track tigers and rhinos through the forest and canoe rivers in search of gharials, the second largest crocodiles in the world.

TREK THE HIMALAYA Nepal contains eight of the globe's 14 tallest peaks, and the trekking areas around the Everest region and the Annapurna Circuit are open again. To escape the hiking crowds, fly to the tiny outpost of Jomsom, north of Pokhara, and explore the Upper Mustang, a dry, rocky region that borders Tibet. —AVERY STONICH

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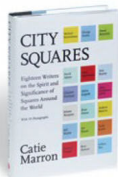
Place des Vosges, was the first planned plaza in Paris.

BOOKSHELF

Square Roots

CITY SQUARES

BY CATIE MARRON



"Authoritarians don't realize what a dangerous thing it is to have a city square," *New Yorker* editor David Remnick writes in this brilliant anthology of essays celebrating the city square, from the Place des Vosges

in Paris to Cairo's Tahrir Square to Mexico City's Zócalo. Eighteen acclaimed writers, including Ann Beattie, Rory Stewart, Zadie Smith, and Adam Gopnik, explore the cultural, historical, and political significance of these "deeply free and public" spaces—which travelers invariably find indispensable as starting, ending, or gathering points. As editor Catie Marron writes, "If there's one essential urban space, it is the square."

■ FOR MORE BOOK REVIEWS, VISIT NATGEOTRAVEL.COM.



Shakespeare State by State

Hamlet, Juliet, and Othello hit the road this year to mark the 400th anniversary of the Bard's death. His 1623 First Folio, one of the world's most valuable books, is visiting every state in the U.S., plus D.C. and Puerto Rico. folger.edu/first-folio-tour

MOTHER TONGUE

BY CHRISTINE GILBERT

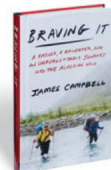
Christine Gilbert embarks on a language immersion quest, living for a time with her husband and their toddler in Beijing, Beirut, and Bucerías, Mexico. Was it an emotional roller coaster? *Shi, nem fielaan, sí, yes.*



BRAVING IT

BY JAMES CAMPBELL

James Campbell takes his teenage daughter into the Alaskan wilderness, building a cabin, hunting for caribou, paddling a canoe to the Arctic Ocean, and strengthening their bond as she becomes more self-sufficient.



WHY THE DUTCH ARE DIFFERENT

BY BEN COATES

British-born Ben Coates journeys throughout his adopted home to dig into seven different aspects of Dutch culture and history, including its "Golden Age," its battle with the sea, and the paradox of legalized prostitution.



STEPHANIE GAUTIER/AGE FOTOSTOCK (SQUARE), REBECCA HALE AND MARK THIESSEN/NGP (BOOKS), LNMSTUFF/DREAMTIME (SHAKESPEARE)



Ghats, or steps, lead to the Ganges River in the ancient Indian city of Varanasi.

MY CITY

Varanasi in Living Color

BY PIERS MOORE EDE

I didn't fall in love with Varanasi at first glance. Rather, like so many newcomers to India's fabled city on the Ganges, I felt overwhelmed by its velocity and color and energy.

Disembarking the Shiv Ganga Express at Varanasi Cantonment train station, I looked around in awe. Unending streams of people, crimson-shirted porters carrying 110-pound loads on their heads, the screech of metal wheels, and, hanging over it all, the smells of rust, urine, and jasmine incense.

Outside the station, the cacophony seemed only to increase. A parade in honor of a local politician had slowed traffic to a crawl, with the common reaction seeming to be "Let's hold down our horns for as long as possible and see if that makes a difference."

From the back of the rickshaw, I could make out nothing of the dignitary as he passed in his white Hindustan Ambassador with tinted windows. After him came a motorcade of police, then a flatbed truck loaded with speakers pumping out Bollywood tunes and, finally, a beautiful, lumbering female elephant.

"Is this normal?" I asked the rickshaw wallah, who was passing the time by shooting livid red jets of *paan* (an often tobacco-laced chew of betel leaf and slaked lime) out of the corner of his mouth, onto the road. "How on earth do you handle driving in these conditions all day?"

"Actually, sir, it's not easy," he confessed with a shrug of his shoulders. "But every morning, when I submerge myself in the river, I ask Ganga-ji to help me through another day."



In the maze of narrow Varanasi streets, a sadhu (Hindu holy man) sits with a metal container for alms.

It's how I survive." Those words would resonate, again and again, as I got to know the city over the years to come. They seemed to express something elemental about Varanasi: homage to the divine and the notion of worship and work as two inter-linked pursuits.

I was fascinated by these things, by the ways people conducted their lives in the medieval alleys of what may be the world's oldest continuously inhabited city, and how a normal discussion here could happily merge the latest cricket match scores with metaphysical speculation.

On that first trip, and on many subsequent ones, I left Varanasi in exhaustion, my mind and stomach both overcome. But each time, I found

myself missing the place. I missed the broad crescent sweep of the river with its temples and ashrams. I missed the *masti*—love of life—which is said to be a defining characteristic of the citizens. Unable to resist this gravitational pull, I finally returned with the intention of staying for a full year. I wanted to know what made the city tick. I rented a simple room in an ugly, custard yellow house at Assi Ghat. I walked the streets every day with a notebook in hand. I was determined to break through to the other side.

One place, in particular, captured my attention: a chai stand in one of the old *galis*, or alleys, not far from my house. Its owner, Balashankar, named after one of the many avatars of Shiva,

Where the Locals Go

The best time to visit my city is January because it's cool yet still sunny, a brief period of respite before the heat begins.

The dish that represents my city best is *bhang* (an edible form of cannabis, which is both legal and entirely culturally acceptable in Varanasi). *Thandai*, a cold drink made of almond milk, spices, and sometimes rose water, is **my city's signature drink**. Sample *bharg* at any government *bharg* shop and *thandai* at Badal Thandai Ghar at Godowlia Chowk.



A good place to buy authentic, local souvenirs is any of the narrow alleys around Manikarnika Ghat.

In the past, notable people who have called my city home include Ravi Shankar.

Just outside my city, you can visit Sarnath, an important Buddhist pilgrimage center where Buddha gave his first teaching, in a deer park.



My city is known for being a place where people come to die, but it's really the most alive city on Earth.

—Piers Moore Ede

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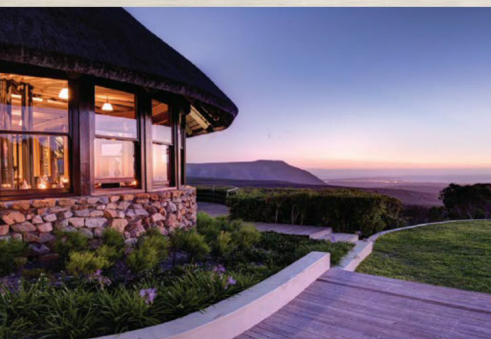
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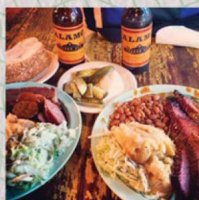
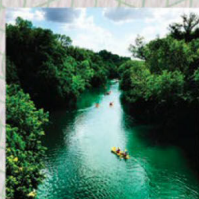
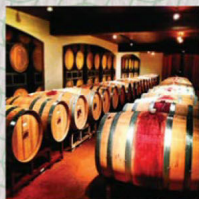
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NOTEBOOK

FROM HERE, THE CITY MAKES SENSE AT LAST, ITS CLOCKWORK RHYTHMS OF LIFE AND DEATH, WORSHIP AND COMMERCE, PRIVATE DEVOTION AND PUBLIC CELEBRATION.

combines a great passion for his métier with a boundless generosity of spirit. When I'm away from Varanasi, it's this place I think of more often than anywhere else: Balashankar lighting the coal brazier just as the first rays of sunlight strike the river; the buffalo herd arriving with two full pails of creamy milk; smells of ginger, green cardamom, black pepper, and cinnamon—a secret masala combination that the chai wallah's father taught him, and his before him.

This place, this experience, encapsulates what I love about the city. It's the quiet camaraderie of the locals sipping hot tea from clay cups, the sounds of Vedic chanting from the nearby temple, the lowing of the neighborhood cows, and occasionally the "Ram Nam Satya Hai," which is the mantra for a body being carried to the cremation ghats.

From here, the city makes sense at last, its clockwork rhythms of life and death, worship and commerce, private devotion

and public celebration. All those who pass by the chai stand are moving either to or from the Ganges, which, only a few feet away, is one of the most auspicious places in the Hindu world.

Some go to conduct the funerals of family members. Others go, with the dust of long journeys on their feet, in search of the salvation that's said to come to those who submerge themselves in its waters.

"I have walked a thousand miles to get here," a sadhu, a holy man, told me one morning. "But I can say that nothing prepares you for the sight of Ma Ganga. Now that I'm here, I don't plan to leave her again."

PIERS MOORE EDE *is the author of Honey and Dust, All Kinds of Magic, and Kaleidoscope City: A Year in Varanasi. He now lives in Sussex, England. This story is a collaboration with our U.K. edition, National Geographic Traveller.*



The devout come early to the Ganges to pray and bathe, which is said to wash away sins.



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7 TRIPS
7 CONTINENTS
7 DECADES

HOW

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WORLD

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Little Kids
North America
Road-trip the Southwest.
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Tweens & Teens
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Head east for buzzing cities.
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Go on a bucket-list cruise.
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NORTH AMERICA

FOR
LITTLE KIDS

SCENES FROM A SOUTHWEST ROAD TRIP WITH A FIVE-YEAR-OLD INSTAGRAM ROCK STAR



Dream catchers
remind visitors that
Utah's Monument
Valley is on Navajo land.



7 TRIPS • 7 CONTINENTS • 7 DECADES



BY AARON HUEY

PHOTOGRAPHS BY AARON AND HAWKEYE HUEY

Long ago my wife, Kristin, and I came up with some simple rules for road trips: Avoid interstates whenever possible, no chain restaurants, try new roads, and stop driving before dark (to find a good place to park the van, our home on the road). Not exactly revolutionary concepts, but they have defined how we have traveled the American West, an area we are drawn to especially now, for family trips with our five-year-old son, Hawkeye.

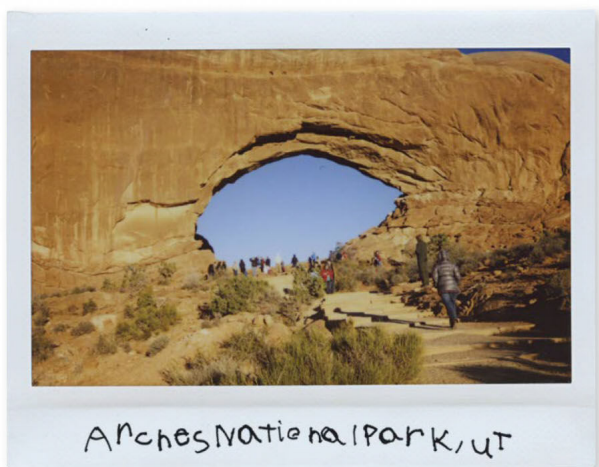
When I met Kristin, 13 years ago in Santa Fe, we fell in love fast. Within three days we set out on our first road trip, along back roads in New Mexico, Arizona, and Utah, tracing our route with an orange marker on a foldout map of the U.S., which I kept in the glove box of my Volkswagen van. It would be the start of a series of trips that forged our sense of family. When Hawkeye was born, we continued the tradition, introducing him to our favorite deserts and parks—and life on the road.

The wide-open spaces and changing landscapes of the West are perfect for young children, who thrive on novelty and adventure: climbing (and falling from) sandstone formations, eating Navajo tacos at an Indian market, hiking under stars far from the light pollution of cities, watching a rodeo in a small town, sleeping in tents. In his first years Hawkeye hiked Joshua Tree National Park (on our backs) and saw the colorfully painted slopes of “Salvation Mountain,” by the Salton Sea. Once he began walking, I took him on solo trips to places his mother and I had marked on our old map, places I’d especially loved, from the well-trodden lookouts in the Grand Canyon and Monument Valley to such lesser known spots as Utah’s Newspaper Rock and Shiprock, New Mexico. I wanted to instill in him a love for adventure, scraped-up knees, and the smell of rain on sagebrush.

In his fourth year I bought him a camera like the ones I had in my youth, where real photos pop out and develop in your hand—physical reminders of that moment in time, not images swiped on a screen. The pictures he took, and others he has shot since, are great treasures to me. But most important are our family adventures along the roads that wind among America’s natural cathedrals—places that were sacred to the native peoples—and the stories and lessons we collect along the way. Hawkeye will get dirt in his mouth and cactus spines in his shoes. And that’s the way it should be in the land of “thunder beings,” the great billowing storms that sweep the desert clean with their rains and winds—then paint their rainbows across the horizon.

See three of our favorite itineraries in the Southwest, and our suggestions and tips for each, on page 54.

■ TO VIEW MORE OF HAWKEYE’S AND AARON HUEY’S IMAGES, VISIT NATGEOTRAVEL.COM. YOU ALSO CAN FOLLOW THEM ON INSTAGRAM @HAWKEYEHUEY AND @ARGONAUTPHOTO.



Through a Child's Eyes

Aaron Huey, a National Geographic photographer based in Seattle, opened an Instagram account for his son, Hawkeye, to share a kid's take on American travels. As of press time, @HawkeyeHuey has 200,000 followers. Here Hawkeye captions some of his instant snaps from a recent Southwest road trip.



Rabbit and Maggie, Slab City



Route 66, Arizona



Tuba City, Arizona



Slab City, California



Salvation Mountain, CA



Hooverdam, Arizona

Saturday night is open
mic at the Range
in Slab City, in the
California desert.



"I WANTED TO INSTILL IN MY SON A LOVE
FOR ADVENTURE, SCRAPED-UP KNEES,
AND THE SMELL OF RAIN ON SAGEBRUSH."



LOOPED IN: 3 SOUTHWEST ROAD TRIPS

LOOP 1

California Curiosities

4-6 DAYS

Start and end in Los Angeles. Outsider art and oddballs keep this road trip through desert landscapes offbeat. Head south on I-5, the glittering Pacific Ocean on your right. At Carlsbad (home to Legoland), turn inland to Borrego Springs and the Anza-Borrego Desert (perfect for stargazing!). Farther east gets you to the surreal Salton Sea, with its remnants of a planned vacation town, abandoned when the lake turned highly saline. Nearby, climb to the top of the heartfelt work of art "Salvation Mountain," then meet the eccentric characters of Slab City. Hike Joshua Tree National Park, where the eponymous trees look like something out of Dr. Seuss's *The Lorax*.

LOOP 2

Canyons Galore

7-10 DAYS

Start and end in Las Vegas. The first stop on this road trip through canyon country: the engineering marvel that is Hoover Dam. Then crank up the tunes and drive old Route 66, stopping at the Hackberry General Store, in Arizona, for its collection of Route 66 memorabilia. Onward to the Grand Canyon! Don't just do the view spots; go out and hike at least a portion of the trails. At the North Rim, spend the night in a cabin at the historic Grand Canyon Lodge. In Utah's Zion National Park, hike the Narrows, with its towering canyon walls. After these natural wonders, head west for a man-made marvel, Michael Heizer's "Double Negative" earthwork art, in Moapa Valley.

LOOP 3

New Mexico Back Roads

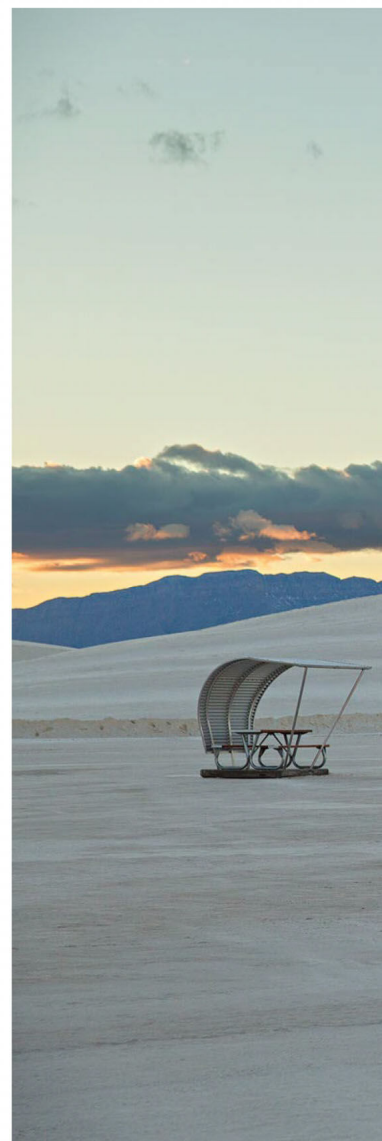
7-14 DAYS

Start and end in Santa Fe. Breakfast burritos and other roadside eats highlight this superloop exploring back roads of the Land of Enchantment. From Santa Fe's artful setting, head north through the Sangre de Cristo Mountains to equally artistic Taos. Pie Town, on the Continental Divide, really does have the best pie, from apple to coconut cream. Nearby, listen in on the universe at the strangely beautiful Very Large Array radio telescope facility. Still dreaming of the stars? Head south to the site of Spaceport America, near the town of Truth or Consequences. Loop back to Santa Fe through White Sands National Monument, for the exhilarating experience of dune sledding.

Clockwise from top left: Hawkeye and Aaron Huey find their happy place in Joshua Tree National Park, in California; in New Mexico, a painted burro stands atop general store Highway 54 Emporium in Carrizozo, and White Sands National Monument provides design-forward picnic tables.



■ FOR MORE ON JOSHUA TREE AND OTHER NATIONAL PARKS, VISIT NATGEO.COM/POWER-OF-PARKS.







ASIA

FOR TWEENS
AND TEENS

DISPATCHES FROM THE LAMAN FAMILY'S WILD SUMMER VACATIONS IN BORNEO



Jessica and Russell
Laman help their
parents track
orangutans in Borneo.



7 TRIPS • 7 CONTINENTS • 7 DECADES



BY CHERYL KNOTT AND JESSICA & RUSSELL LAMAN

PHOTOGRAPHS BY TIM LAMAN

“My friends are probably at home playing video games, and I’m pulling a canoe upriver in Borneo!” shouted our son, Russell, eight years old at the time, as we made our way to my research station deep in the rain forests of Indonesia’s Gunung Palung National Park, one of the last strongholds of the endangered Bornean orangutan. The real world always beats electronics. That’s the essence of why my husband, Tim Laman, and I have brought Russell and our daughter, Jessica, to this isolated rain forest camp annually, as I check in on my long-term project studying wild orangutans, and Tim takes photographs for *National Geographic* magazine.

Traveling with children in tow may seem like a challenge, but with a bit of planning it’s doable, even to the most obscure places. If you start when they’re babies, they (and you) will soon be experts. Involve your kids in planning the trip so they’ll feel invested in it. And always carry a big book to relieve the tedium of inevitable travel delays. Last year I read *Lord of the Rings* out loud to the whole family, which ended up being a memorable shared experience. We’ve been lucky enough to have these opportunities to travel to wild places with our kids, but the thrill of nature can be as close as your own backyard. Whether kayaking on your local pond or camping in a Southeast Asian rain forest, there’s nothing that surpasses seeing nature again for the first time in the eyes of your child.

Photographer Tim Laman, his wife, researcher Cheryl Knott, and their kids get a break from bushwhacking through the Borneo rain forest when the orangutan they are following stops to eat.



■ VIEW MORE OF TIM LAMAN'S PHOTOGRAPHS AT PROOF.NATGEO.COM.
YOU CAN ALSO FOLLOW TIM ON INSTAGRAM @TIMLAMAN.

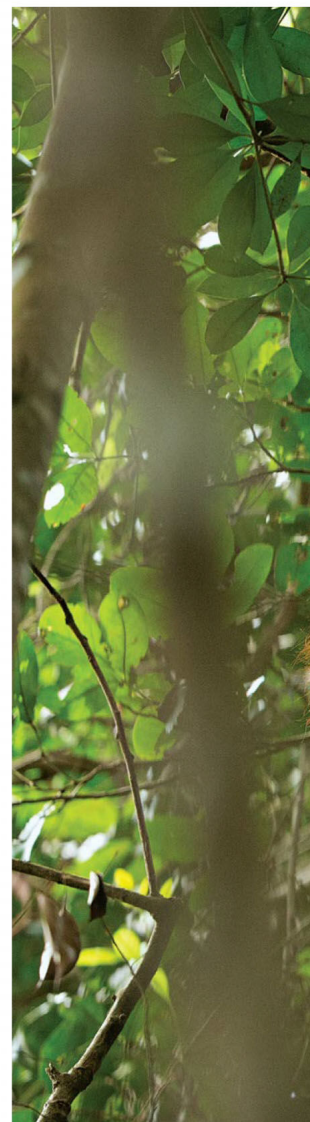
What I Did on My Summer Vacation

Jessica, 12

BANG! Crunch! A heavy fruit falls from the high canopy and lands on the tin roof of our hut, waking me. I sit up, engulfed in the ruckus of the Borneo rain forest. I pull on my boots and set off along the trail toward the main camp. Our rustic jungle hut consists of a single room with three wooden walls and one half wall, elevated above the rain forest floor and sheltered by a tin roof. Since the age of five I have traveled to my mom's remote orangutan research station in Gunung Palung as part of my summer vacation. Seven years later it only amazes me more. I take a big gulp of the fresh air. The rain forest abounds with life. Even if I may not be able to see all those tiny whirring insects or songbirds hidden high in the canopy, that sense of life flows through me, filling me with energy.

Russell, 15

My sister and I join my dad and other members of the research team in tracking a big male orangutan who is swinging through the rain forest canopy, spectacular-looking with his giant cheek pads. We follow him on his journey to find food, spending a few minutes in one tree before moving on to the next. Of all the animals and plants in the Borneo rain forest, the orangutan is the ultimate find. Its effortless motion through the treetops, paired with its humanlike interactions, makes it an extraordinary sight. Although orangutans do not usually travel in groups, each moment they do interact is a touching reminder of how similar they are to us. We watch him until he settles down for the night. Then we don our headlamps and get out our compasses and maps. Predictably, Dad says, "OK, kids, you lead us back to camp." And we do just that.



Sighting a baby orangutan is a thrill even for experienced researchers such as Cheryl Knott. Young orangutans depend on their mom for some six years, learning how to survive in the rain forest. Visit saveGPorangutans.org for more info.

TREVOR FROST (LAMAN FAMILY); NC MAPS



3 Picks for Borneo Wildlife Watching

Borneo includes regions of Malaysia and Indonesia. The Malaysian side has several ecotourism options and national parks that are more developed. BorneoAdventure.com can organize itineraries.

KINABATANGAN WILDLIFE SANCTUARY

A 100-square-mile protected floodplain provides a home to orangutans, proboscis monkeys, and pygmy elephants. Check in at Sukau Rainforest Lodge, one of the National Geographic Unique Lodges of the World.

DANUM VALLEY CONSERVATION AREA

In this 169-square-mile lowland forest, stay at Borneo Rainforest Lodge, 30 chalets with outdoor tubs and prime forest views. Borneo Nature Tours has excellent guides. borneonaturetours.com

GUNUNG MULU NATIONAL PARK

No orangutans here, but many other species roam this World Heritage site known for its limestone pinnacles and network of caves, including the largest known cave chamber in the world. mulupark.com





EUROPE

IN YOUR
TWENTIES

A 7-DAY ITINERARY TRACKS THE LOCALS IN BUDAPEST, ZAGREB, AND SARAJEVO.



Budapest's old-world
Széchenyi Baths
innovates with late-
night "spa parties."



7 TRIPS • 7 CONTINENTS • 7 DECADES



BY NINA STROCHLIC

PHOTOGRAPHS BY AKOS STILLER

Venture from the well-worn Prague and Vienna circuit to explore lands where prices are cheaper and flea markets plentiful. This insider-inspired European itinerary starts in Budapest to soak alongside locals at thermal baths, then south to Zagreb, with its artisans and eccentric Museum of Broken Relationships, and finally to Sarajevo, where the bullet-scarred Olympic bobsled track is a sobering reminder of the 1990s war. Throughout, an enterprising new generation gives visitors to the Old World a fresh welcome.

BUDAPEST, HUNGARY

DAY 1 Hopping aboard the 96 miles of tram lines in Budapest is a cheap way to orient yourself in the Hungarian capital. Trams 47 and 49 stop in front of the Great Market Hall. “Don’t forget to check out the fishmongers and colorful pickle stalls in the basement,” says Carolyn Bánfalvi, founder of food and wine tour company Taste Hungary. Take Tram 2 along the Danube River to the spire-bristling Hungarian Parliament. Nearby is Hold Street Market, where perfectly fried schnitzel served at Buja Disznók draws discerning foodies.

Walk across stately Chain Bridge to the Buda side of the river to check out the imposing Buda Castle complex.

Back on the Pest side, some of the best traditional restaurants

can be found in Budapest’s old Jewish Quarter. The matzo ball soup at family-run Rosenstein has a cult following. This revitalized neighborhood also hosts Budapest’s famed “ruin bars.” In the early 2000s, impromptu nightlife venues began popping up in abandoned buildings. The pioneering Szimpla Kert, a sprawling maze of oddities and various bars, is the most popular. For a calmer night, drop in on newcomer Mazel Tov.

► *Stay: At Brody House, each guest room displays an ever evolving gallery by a single artist.*

DAY 2 With its re-created prison cells and other interactive exhibits, the House of Terror gives a feel for life in Hungary during its fascist and communist regimes. Then sit down at Kádár Étkezde, a lunch-only holdout from the 1950s still heaping plates with Hungarian staples. A 20-minute bus ride out of town leads to Memento Park, final resting place of statues of Lenin, Stalin, and other communist icons.

At apartment restaurant Zoltán 18, a Hungarian-Canadian and Russian couple serve elaborate six-course meals, with starters such as tandoori octopus and egg-yolk ravioli, in a minimalist dining room. Bambi Eszpresszó, an intellectual hangout in the 1960s where regulars now gather for backgammon, is the ideal spot for a local Dreher Pilsener.

DAY 3 Budapest has no shortage of coffee houses in which to nurse cups of espresso and sample creamy tortes. On the grand end of the spectrum, the revived Centrál “was once one of the prime salons for Hungary’s famed artists, writers, and literary stars, before shutting down during communism,” says Bánfalvi.

Find further relaxation in the city’s other favorite pastime: bathing. Ottoman-era Veli Bej is the oldest hammam in the city.

At night, it’s time to dial up the energy at Corvintető, a dance party on the top floor of a communist-era department store.

ZAGREB, CROATIA

DAY 4 “Even if you don’t have a goal, a long walk through the streets of Zagreb always brings discoveries,” says Iva Silla, the founder of Secret Zagreb, a tour company and city blog. Get your bearings in the heart of the diminutive Croatian capital at Ban Jelačić Square, and wander down artisan-filled Ilica Street and its quirky alleyways. Nearby, a courtyard hides the Lapo Lapo studio, created by and for local street artists.

Then you can climb a few blocks to the Museum of Broken Relationships, a bizarre but poignant collection of keepsakes from failed love affairs, like a noseless garden dwarf that was thrown at a husband’s new car. Stari Fijaker serves up comfort food such as veal ragout and black pudding. Vinyl has a theme





Clockwise from top: Sarajevo's Latin Bridge is the site of the 1914 assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand, which sparked WWI; Zagreb's Art Pavilion provides the belle époque backdrop for a seasonal ice rink; bullets have become souvenirs at shops in Sarajevo's Baščaršija quarter.

for every evening, from book exchanges to live music.

► *Stay: At 4 City Windows B&B, rooms reflect aspects of Zagreb culture, including a Cartoon Room.*

DAY 5 Scour the best treasures at Zagreb's flea markets. Dolac market "is one of the most colorful sights in Zagreb," says Silla. British Square on the weekends "has trapped the spirit of the old days." Reenergize with a plate of *štrukli*, a dish of cheese and dough dumpling topped with clotted cream, at La Štruk.

Then head to the forested peaks of neighboring Mount Medvednica, accessible by tram. "We call the mountain the lungs of the city," says Silla. "It is a perfect getaway."

SARAJEVO, BOSNIA & HERZEGOVINA

DAY 6 Two decades have passed since an almost four-year siege pummeled this capital of Bosnia and Herzegovina. You can still see bullet holes on buildings, but the citizens haven't lost their zest for life. For an overview of the city, a tram or taxi will take you past the Latin Bridge—where visiting Archduke Franz Ferdinand was shot, setting World War I into motion—to the newly remodeled History Museum, which focuses on 20th-century Sarajevo. Nearby, the recently reopened National Museum holds Bosnia's archaeologic and artistic treasures.

Tito Cafe is filled with amusingly reappropriated decor, but head to the old Ottoman quarter Baščaršija for souvenirs. "The city center is still visited by the locals, and the prices are local prices," says Adnan Zuka, a guide at tour company Sarajevo Insider. Then fill up on Bosnia's most famous dish, a grilled minced meat sandwich called *ćevapi*, at Ćevabdžinica Željo.

"You always start with a coffee here," says Zuka, of Bosnian nightlife. Try the Čajdžinica Džirlo Tea House for a warm welcome and caffeine, then move on to cocktails at Cafe Barometar or head to party spot Cinema Sloga.

► *Stay: Halvat Hotel has made-to-order breakfast feasts and friendly staff who provide city tips.*

DAY 7 The Sarajevo Siege Tour takes visitors on an intimate trip to the mountainous front line. Walk on the 1984 Olympic bobsled track, left littered with artillery shells. On the way back, stop at the Tunnel Museum to learn about the secret passageway Sarajevans dug to transport supplies.

A defiant wartime spirit also lives on in the Sarajevo War Theater, founded during the siege. "The goal was to have some fun," says Zuka. The performances may be largely in Bosnian, but the entertainment remains, so catch a show anyway and then decamp for your last night to nearby Zlatna Ribica, a curio cabinet of a bar that embraces all comers.

Eastern Europe's Bright Lights

BELGRADE, SERBIA

You haven't seen the sun rise until you watch it lift over the Danube from one of the all-night floating barge clubs in Belgrade. Restaurants such as the sprawling Supermarket and mojito-slinging Smokvica ("little fig") cater to a new nightlife-addicted generation.

LJUBLJANA, SLOVENIA

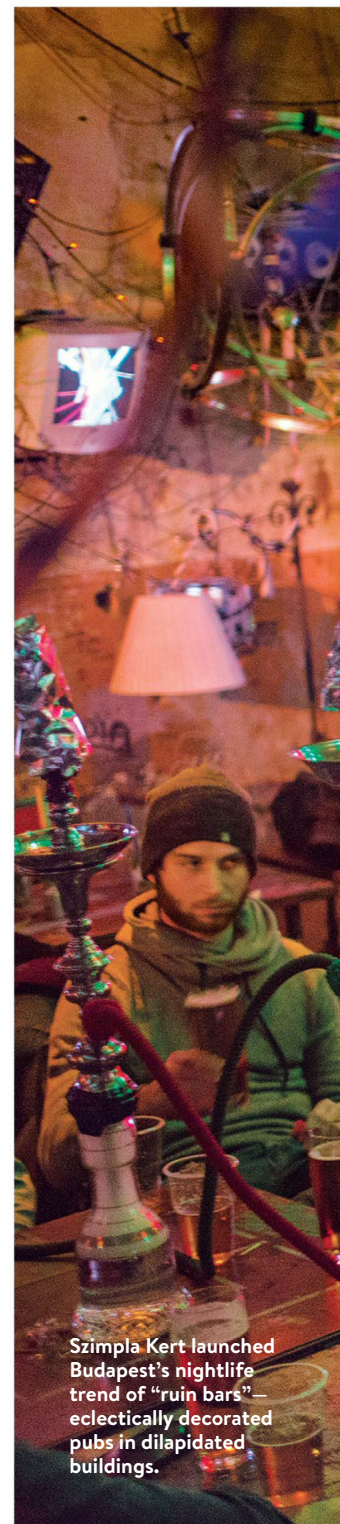
A storybook city set on a photogenic river, Ljubljana is a breath of fresh air. Literally: This year it snagged the Green Capital of Europe title. Bring a book to trade in the library of brick-walled Todz bar, then hang out as the riverbank turns into an open-air party at sunset.

TIRANA, ALBANIA

With a half-century of dictator-imposed isolation in its rearview mirror, Tirana has adapted aspects of its socialist past with artistic flourish: Boxy downtown buildings now wear coats of rainbow paint. Elsewhere, patrons of outdoor cafés such as Funky Moustache spill onto the sidewalks.

TIP: Due to some outdated infrastructure and the current refugee crisis, train travel is not always reliable in eastern Europe. Verify schedules and routes when possible, but be flexible.

■ TO VIEW MORE OF AKOS STILLER'S PHOTOS, VISIT NATGEOTRAVEL.COM. YOU CAN ALSO FOLLOW HIM ON INSTAGRAM @STILLERAKOS.



Szimpla Kert launched Budapest's nightlife trend of "ruin bars"—eclectically decorated pubs in dilapidated buildings.





AUSTRALIA

IN YOUR
THIRTIES

YOU'VE DONE URBAN IN EUROPE. READY FOR WAVES, WINERIES, AND WALLABIES?





7 TRIPS • 7 CONTINENTS • 7 DECADES



Evening's lull belies
the daily wave action
at Surfer's Point,
a popular destination
for big Pacific rollers.

A continent unto itself, brash, sun-splashed Australia serves up the perfect mix of adventure and urbanity for 30-somethings who spent the twilight of their 20s Instagramming Italy's *piazze* and tweeting from Trafalgar Square. The land down under fuses carefree youthfulness with a jazzy sophistication, raw nature with edgy architecture—and not just in the expected places, such as relentlessly cosmopolitan Sydney or along the Great Barrier Reef.

Head to Oz's southwest corner, and you'll discover the Margaret River Valley, a cloistered world of wild beaches, jeweled caves, towering eucalyptus forests, and world-class vineyards that connoisseurs compare favorably to Napa and Bordeaux. Just to its north sits Perth, the sunny capital of the surrounding state of Western Australia.

"For a long time the only folks who came down this way were surfers and hippies," says Australian food and wine writer Max Veenhuizen. Better roads in the 1980s improved the area's accessibility, turning the town named Margaret River and its surrounding countryside into one of Perth's toniest weekend getaways. "And yet this area still feels very much like rural Australia," Veenhuizen adds.

Therein lies its magic. Margaret River, as the bigger region calls itself, continues to draw board-loving bohemians as it has since the late 1960s—even if some of those surfers now sport silver hair and bring their grandchildren.



3 Emerging Aussie Wine Regions

GREAT SOUTHERN

Drive east from Margaret River Valley and you come upon the Great Southern wine region, really a web of five subregions that take advantage of the area's diversity of soil types to produce everything from Chardonnays to Cabernets. Rieslings and Syrahs receive special acclaim, from such wineries as Howard Park and Harewood Estate. Also in the area: Western Australia's oldest European settlement, Albany, and the dramatic granite outcrops of Porongurup National Park.

GIPPSLAND

A region of family vintners two hours east of Melbourne, pastoral Gippsland has earned a place in Australian wine lore with its Pinot Noirs. Accolades have gone to those crafted at Bass Phillip and Cannibal Creek wineries; the latter also wins awards for its Chardonnays. Wine pairs with pastas and other delectables at Narkoojee and Toms Cap vineyards, popular for their restaurants. Area attractions include Baw Baw National Park, for hiking and skiing, and the old gold-mining town of Walhalla, with its Heritage Walk.

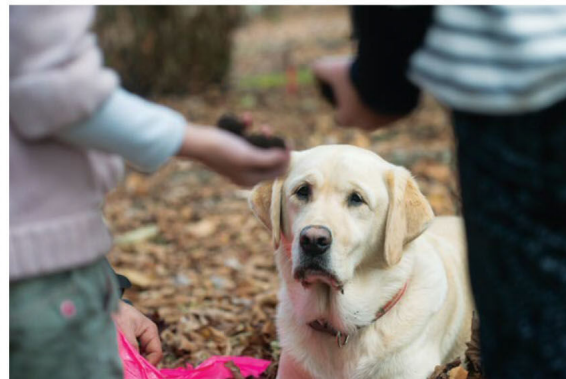
TASMANIA

Australia's biggest island has been turning out flavorful, aromatic wines with grapes that thrive in cooler climates. Its densest concentrations of vineyards lie in the northern Tamar Valley and the East Coast region. Among the top varietals are Pinot Noir and Chardonnay, both more recently adapted to make sparkling wines. Activities to check out: biking the Tamar Valley Wine Route and hiking in coastal Freycinet National Park.

Clockwise from top left: Chef Paul Iskov forages for wild native plants to cook; hand-picked grapes await collection; local truffles grab the attention of a truffle-hunting dog; morning bicyclists roll past Margaret River Valley vineyards.



OPENING PAGES: MARK BOSKELL/ELEMENTS MARGARET RIVER; MICHELLE TROOP (FORAGER); ANDREW WATSON/ALAMY STOCK PHOTO (GRAPES); RUSSELL ORD/ELEMENTS MARGARET RIVER (DOG, BIKERS); NG MAPS; WORLD DATABASE ON PROTECTED AREAS



“Friday afternoons, I’d pester some of the older guys for a lift to the beaches,” says Bill Gibson, who started coming here as a teenager to ride the big, glassy Indian Ocean rollers that break along the coast. “If I couldn’t score a ride, I’d get my Mum to drop me and my board in Fremantle, then I’d stick out my thumb. The drive was a classic Aussie adventure: four hours on a road that just got narrower and narrower and more crowded with trees. The cars were old bombs on wheels; we picked up great mechanical skills during that era. And the waves along the south coast never disappointed.”

Gibson up and moved to Margaret River as soon as he finished school, snagging jobs on local farms, stints at the sawmill, or gigs at area vineyards, which were just starting to be planted. Those fledgling vines he and his mates tended have flourished, transforming this into one of the world’s premier wine regions—though at 20 square miles it’s relatively small, and generates just four percent of Australia’s wine. Yet its 200-plus wineries punch well above their weight, accounting for 25 percent of the nation’s premium wine market. The reason is simple.

“We have a nearly perfect maritime Mediterranean climate,” says Dianne Laurance, owner and chief winemaker at Laurance Wines, “and gravelly loamy soils that are ideal for producing premium grapes and premium wines. I’ve always thought Napa produces wines similar to Margaret River; we’re both justly famous for our Chardonnays and Cabernets. We also have a lot in common with Bordeaux.”

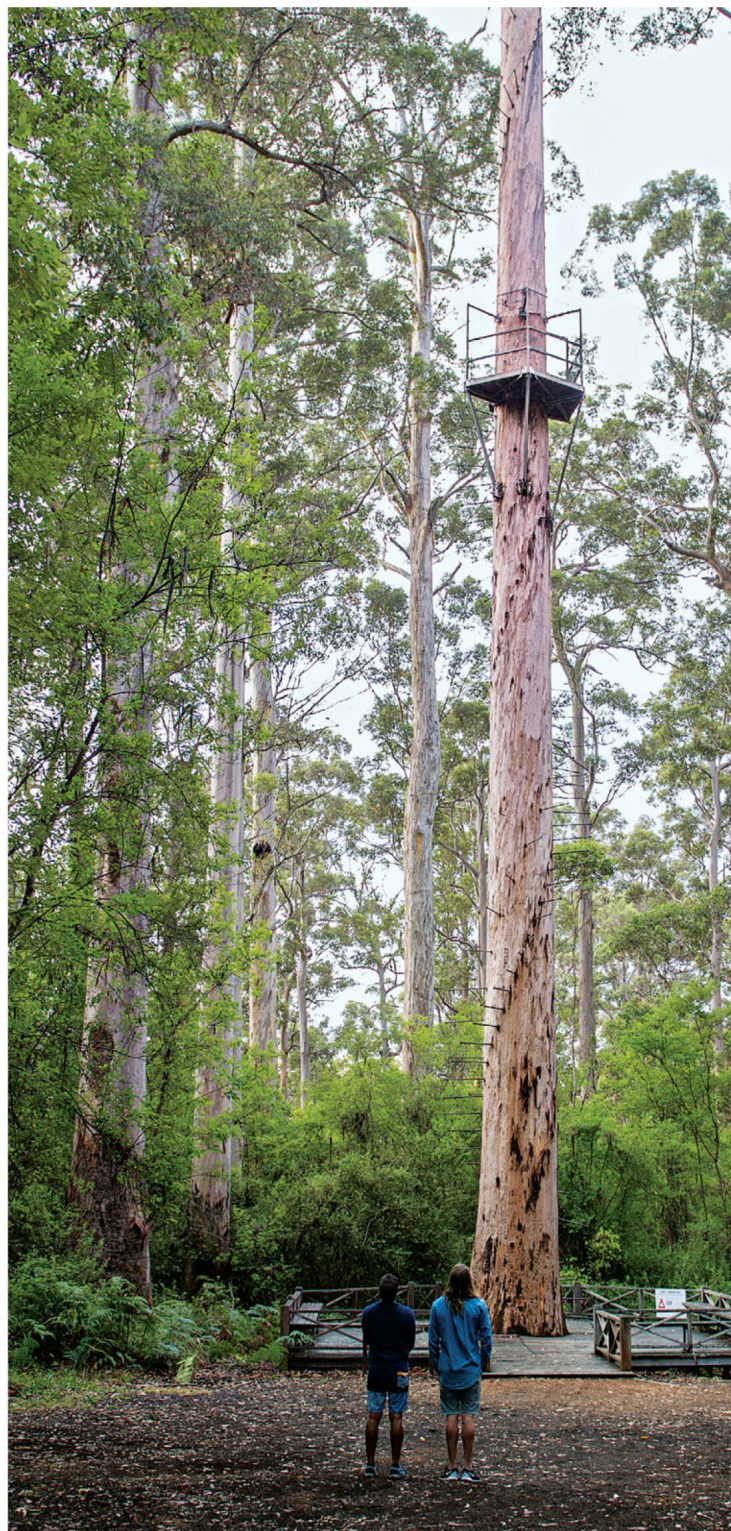
The wineries have helped the low-slung town of Margaret River quadruple in size, chockablock with breezy eateries, art galleries, and wine cellars. And the rich terroir that fosters Margaret River’s premium grapes turns out a cornucopia of other foodstuffs, from cheeses and honeys to olive oils, fruits, and nuts. It also delivers those rarest and costliest of delicacies, truffles, which are celebrated at the Truffle Kerfuffle, an annual event held near the town of Manjimup. Among the festival’s highlights: truffle-cooking classes by world-class chefs and truffle-hunting demonstrations by truffle-sniffing dogs.

“The pristine environment here in the southern forests, with its fertile soils and plentiful rainfall, apparently makes it ideal for truffles,” says local grower David Pottinger, who supplies rare black truffles to Michelin-starred restaurants around the world. “As far as we’re aware, we have the most prolific *trufferie* in the world.”

Pottinger and other area farmers went into truffle cultivation about 15 years ago, planting oak trees and inoculating them with black-truffle spores.

READ IT, DO IT

Explore Australia’s outsize landscapes, from the wilds of Tasmania to the Blue Mountains, the outback to the Great Barrier Reef, with National Geographic Expeditions and Journeys. To learn more, visit www.nationalgeographicexpeditions.com.





Tall order: The Dave Evans Bicentennial Tree is one of several climbable giant karris, or eucalyptuses.

RUSSELL ORDI/ELEMENTS MARGARET RIVER

“Personally, I didn’t expect much,” he says. “We joked about our expensive plantation of oak trees. It was a very big gamble.”

Why this particular pocket of west Australia proves so conducive to growing the tasty fungus remains a mystery.

“Conventional wisdom says we’re too hot, too close to the sea, and not elevated enough to produce truffles,” says Pottinger. “But this is a very special place. Just how special was brought home to me recently when a French chef—one of France’s leading truffle distributors—visited our operation. His parting words to me were: Please plant more trees. What you have here is unique.”

THOSE WORDS APPLY TO OTHER features in the Margaret River Valley, starting with Bill Gibson’s cherished surf. This past June, a 35-year-old father of two, Justin Holland, mastered what is believed to be the biggest wave ever ridden in Australia, a 60-foot-high monster at a surf break in Leeuwin-Naturaliste National Park nicknamed Cow Bombie. Not that surfing along this coastline requires expert skills.

“We have lots of hidden bays and coves where inexperienced surfers can get up to speed,” says Gibson.

Also in its own class: the Leeuwin-Naturaliste coast (named for the Dutch ship *Leeuwin* and French ship *Naturaliste*, which first explored the area), honeycombed with more than 150 caves, such as Mammoth Cave, where fossils of giant marsupials that once roamed Australia have been found; Ngilgi Cave, with an exquisite set of stalagmites, stalactites, and stone drapes; and one of Australia’s largest show caves, Jewel, known for its flowstone pipe-organ and waterfall formations.

Above ground—well above it—rise forests of giant karris, eucalyptus trees that grow nowhere else but this corner of Australia and, at heights up to 300 feet, rank among Earth’s tallest hardwoods. Some even can be climbed, on ladders of metal rungs that spiral up the trunk. The loftiest is the Dave Evans Bicentennial Tree, with a 246-foot-high viewing platform reached by scaling 165 rungs.

And what is a trip to Australia without seeing kangaroos? They’re here too; they occasionally bound around the local golf course. Guests at Yelverton Brook Eco-chalets sleep next to the Yelverton Conservation Sanctuary, home to roos, wallabies, bandicoots (rabbit-size marsupials), and other local fauna. Seventeen miles south, young joeys, llamas, and more traditional farm animals roam the grounds at the Sunflowers Animal Farm and Farmstay, where optional farm chores come with the rustic quarters. A custom amenity: free buckets of animal feed.

ROFF SMITH is the author of *Cold Beer & Crocodiles*, a *National Geographic* book about his cycling trip through the outback. Based in Australia, he often works with *National Geographic Expeditions*.



SOUTH AMERICA

IN YOUR
FORTIES

A MOM GOES ROGUE IN CHILE'S LAND OF LAKES AND VOLCANOES.





7 TRIPS • 7 CONTINENTS • 7 DECADES



All mist and froth, Puma Waterfall makes for splashy entertainment in Chile's Huilo Huilo Biological Reserve.

BY JAYNE WISE

PHOTOGRAPHS BY PABLO CORRAL VEGA

I am a mom...on the lam. I guess I should explain.

Recently, my husband and son announced, out of the blue, “We’re going on a road trip, just us men.” So it’s come to this, I thought. The guys go one way, leaving mom on the sideline. Fine. I can play this game.

“I’ll hit the road too, then,” I bantered back, “trolling for adventure.” We all chuckled—until my eyes fell on the mess in the kitchen. Suddenly I knew hitting the road was exactly what I’d do. Head out, go rogue, take that walk on the wild side. All I needed was a destination that had, oh, everything: nature, culture, history, good food, and an adventure or two. A land that would fire up my routine-rusted mom synapses.

But how to get from here to wherever that is? I needed ideas, so I called my friend Uli. “You know, I’m living in an amazing place. It’s like Tuscany, Bavaria, and Lake Como rolled into one, but with calderas. Look it up: Chile’s volcanoes and lakes region, south of the capital, Santiago.” He moved there to follow dreams—and it’s where he now urges me to follow some of mine.

So here I am, on fuming Villarrica Volcano, making my way through a very dark lava tube. “We’re in one of Earth’s more interesting formations,” says my guide as he steers me along with his headlamp, “a volcanic cave created when a blazing stream of lava cooled on contact with surface air, hardening the outer layer into a shell.” Drops of condensation ping my

head as we snake through the cylinder, its walls now coated with moss, and emerge into a witches’ brew of mist swirling around Villarrica’s top half. Expanses of black cinder spread out everywhere I look, evidence of this volcano’s explosive might as one of Chile’s most active craters; somewhere far below lie Lake Villarrica and the Tahoe-like town of Pucón. Bet my boys aren’t turning up anything like this on their road trip.

“WE’VE HAD GUESTS CARRY ON about how this view of Lake Villarrica reminds them of the Italian lakes,” says Rony Pollak that afternoon when she finds me gazing out from a terrace at Hotel Antumalal, the jewel of a lodge her parents created in the 1950s and my home for the next few nights. Villarrica Volcano lurks behind us, letting off steam. Below, bees weave among the violet hydrangeas in the hotel’s gardens. A breeze ruffles a nearby chestnut tree before swooping down to rustle up whitecaps on the lake. To our right, sailboat masts spear the air in Pucón’s harbor. Just as eye-catching is this lodge, a modernist poem in stone and wood suggestive of Frank Lloyd Wright.

“It couldn’t get any better than this for my parents, who moved here from Prague in the 1930s,” Pollak says, then pauses. “Except for the volcano.” Antumalal wasn’t the Pollaks’ first hotel. Avid skiers, they’d built a lodge on the glacier-blanketed slope of Villarrica Volcano in the 1940s. All was good until 1949, when a mudflow destroyed the lodge. “They’d already bought this land, thankfully at a safer distance from the volcano.”

“And Pucón?” I ask. The town crouches at the volcano’s base.

“It’s in the danger zone for lava flows.”

Within the hour I’m walking to town to see how people live with such an explosive neighbor. Soon I spot signs marking evacuation routes. So it’s almost a shock to find a thriving town, its restaurants—Volcamburger, Mamas y Tapas—and brand-name shops like North Face swarming with adventure-sports types. Any sense of living on borrowed time seems absent. Or is the heightened sense of danger a sort of catnip? When I’d asked a local why he was here, he’d answered, “To be around this,” pointing to the volcanic terrain, “where the planet is most alive.”

LOOKING OUT ON LAKE VILLARRICA that evening, I process all I’ve seen in one day—and wonder what lies ahead on the route south to my endpoint, Chile’s largest lake, Llanquihue. First, though, Pollak has more to show me in her beloved backyard.

“We’re off to Curarrehue,” she announces the next morning, packing two bag lunches into her car. “It’s a Mapuche town whose inhabitants are reviving the indigenous Mapuche culture.”

A half-hour’s drive through mountain valleys dappled with sheep brings us to the tidy roadside settlement. Pollak pulls up in front of Cocina de Elisa—Elisa’s Kitchen.





A food truck wrapped in head shots of rock stars dishes up tacos and other specialties of chef Gustavo Sandoval Rivas along Lake Llanquihue.

"*Entra, entra,*" says a smiling Elisa Cea Epuin as she arranges breads hot from the oven. The cottage steeps in the aroma of honey and baked berries. Jars of marinating fruits line wood shelves, but I'm drawn to a bowl of what look like supersize almonds. "*Que son estos?*" I ask. "*Piñones de la araucaria,*" Elisa says. Nuts of the *Araucaria araucana*, Chile's national tree, native only to this part of the country and western Argentina, five miles to the east. The starchy seeds are a staple Mapuche ingredient.

Pollak hands me a roll. "It's made with piñon flour." The taste perfectly balances sweet and doughy. On our way out I ask Elisa for a souvenir to buy. She opens a jar of purple jam. "*Maqui*"—Chilean wineberry. I swipe up a spoonful of the spread. "*Muy rico in antioxidantes,*" she says.

Maqui also is *muy rico* in color, I learn 20 minutes later, up

a dirt road at Textilera Mapuche, where 30-something Juanita Becerra continues the Mapuche weaving tradition. Trailed by a meowing kitten ("she thinks I'm her mother"), Becerra ushers Pollak and me into her cottage showroom, arrayed with woolen wares—vests, ponchos, belts. "Feel this," she prompts, holding a ball of yarn she's just carded. I finger the wool, thick and soft. Outside, sheep bleat. Becerra's operation is soup to nuts: She shears the sheep, spins and dyes the wool, devises designs, then gets busy weaving. I gravitate to a purple scarf for my teenaged son, who always underdresses in winter. "The maqui berry gives that wonderful color," she says. I'm tempted to buy it but, no longer clear on what clothing he'll like, pass, a decision I'll regret.

"I have one more spot to show you," Pollak says as we get back in her car. "It's a special place of mine. Huinfuica Lagoon."

The scenery transforms before my eyes as we climb south. The vegetation—leafy, mixed with fir trees—is abruptly overtaken by araucarias, their slender trunks sheathed in gnarly bark and sprouting tiered branches. Dinosaur trees. Dubbed “living fossils” for their thousand-year life span, araucarias (also called monkey-puzzle trees) are sacred to the Mapuche. As is Lanín Volcano, rearing up like a snow-robed god on the near horizon.

“This may be my favorite hike on Earth,” Pollak says, parking. A flurry of emerald-winged parakeets swirls into view above us. As we step onto a trail winding through bamboo, araucaria, and beech trees, a gold-winged beetle teeters in and settles on my arm. Suddenly, a green lizard, neon in the shade, darts onto the path—and I think of my son. I helped him with homework on the brown lizards back home. This showy one would transport him. Why in the world, my mom brain hisses, am I here without him?

Unnerved, I sprint ahead of Pollak to Huin-fuica Lagoon, and find the answer. The pool, flanked on three sides by mountains, like a Roman amphitheater, lies still as glass. Behind me rises Lanín Volcano, silent but very present. The only footprints on the volcanic sand are mine; I have the place utterly to myself. For a long moment I feel removed from the scrolling of time—a feeling that the presence of my teenage son, no matter how much I wish he were here, would have altered.

GLITTERING LAKES and bluffs threaded with the slenderest of waterfalls mark my drive south the following day.

“*Bienvenida a la Montaña Mágica!*” I barely register the receptionist’s greeting; I’m sizing up the sight before me, a conical, hobbit-like wood lodge. Or is it a volcano? “A bit of both,” the receptionist explains. “Our Magic Mountain represents our forest as well as Mocho-Choshuenco Volcano. See it over there?”

She points out a window. Hulking Mocho-Choshuenco is the heart of the 232-square-mile Huilo Huilo Biological Reserve, a sustainable-tourism playground with a museum, trails, and multiple lodges, including the adjacent Nothofagus. Which is where I now find myself corkscrewing down a log ramp to meet Chilean writer Manuel Pino Toro. Nothofagus is an inversion of Magic Mountain’s cone; guest rooms radiate off the spiraling central ramp into surrounding trees. “What do you think?” Toro asks as he orders us pisco sours. Men in kayaking gear tramp past. I scan banisters made of branches and windows looking out on trees. “Whoever designed this place had fun,” I say.

He suggests I visit the Huilo Huilo Foundation, in the nearby

village of Neltume. When I get there, I hear laughter rippling out of the side-street cottage. Entering, I find women making cloth dolls accessorized with acorns and other forest-sourced trappings during a foundation workshop.

“*Fabricamos muñecos mágicas,*” says one woman. “We are making magical fairies depicting our natural world.” Another woman is stitching lichen onto a fairy: a straight-from-the-forest jacket. Then I spot a flute-toting sprite, the perfect talisman for my musical son. As the ladies wrap it up for me, they urge me to visit the beekeeping workshop, to try its organic honey.

Adventure—hiking, kayaking, mountain biking—is Huilo Huilo’s other focus, so soon I’m maneuvering crampon-fanged boots on a glacier on Mocho-Choshuenco. Roped up, I’m following the tracks of Leandro, the guide leading me and Toro, whom I’ve coaxed into joining me, toward the summit.

“This volcano is part of the Pacific ‘ring of fire,’” Leandro calls out as we tramp along. He stops at a crevasse: Its ice walls glisten with blue meltwater, a beautiful but disquieting sight. Glaciers here, as elsewhere, are retreating. Leandro sweeps his arm around. “You can see eight of the nine major volcanoes that formed this part of Chile.” He points out Osorno, near my last stop, Puerto Varas. Maybe it’s the lofty view, but I’m feeling light as a feather.

Feathers sure would come in handy within the hour. “Didn’t you want to zip-line?” Leandro asks when we’re back in the SUV. “We have one of the best in South America, the Condor.”

So here Toro and I stand, harnessed and helmeted, on the lip of a gorge called El Abismo. Across the abyss—a 300-foot-deep slash in the mountain—snakes a zip line. “Really, Leandro?

We’re first-timers.” My voice sounds pale.

“Ladies first,” Toro declares. Well, fine. Then it hits me: I’ll do this for bragging rights with my son. I toe the edge—and launch myself across the chasm, over treetops and under what suddenly feels like an infinite sky. Rocketing in, I pull off a solid landing. Toro follows. Exultant, we high-five and begin shedding our harnesses. “Not so fast,” Leandro says, grinning. “The Condor has five zip lines. *Venga!*”

Huilo Huilo’s spell will vaporize the next day as the scenery reverts to fields and towns on my drive to Lake Llanquihue. Soon I make out Osorno Volcano and within the hour reach Hotel Arrebol, a rock-meets-wood lodge near the resort town of Puerto Varas. Blue-eyed co-owner Harald Opitz Jurgens gives me the lay of the land. “Do you know any German? Puerto Varas and the town of Frutillar, across the lake, were largely settled by

THIS PART OF
CHILE HONORS
WHAT HAS BEEN
AND LOOKS
FORWARD TO
WHAT CAN BE.
WHICH, IN A
WAY, IS THE
CONVERSATION
I HAVE BEEN
HAVING WITH
MYSELF ABOUT
MOTHERHOOD.



Clockwise from top left: The log-built Nothofagus Hotel blends in with its woody setting in the Huilo Huilo Reserve. Backdropped by Osorno Volcano, a visitor feeds llamas along Lake Llanquihue. Clean lines and wide window views distinguish the refined Hotel Antumalal, in Pucón.



"I'M LIVING IN AN
AMAZING PLACE,"
MY FRIEND ULI
SAYS. "IT'S LIKE
TUSCANY, BAVARIA,
AND LAKE COMO
ROLLED INTO
ONE, BUT WITH
CALDERAS."

One of South America's
most active volcanoes,
Villarrica lights up a
star-splashed night sky.
Its most recent eruption
was in May 2015.



The Best of Chile's Lakes Region

LAKES AND MORE LAKES

Glaciers that helped shape this part of Chile left behind lots of lakes. Worth a detour: the “Seven Lakes,” south of Pucón, which include serene Lake Calafquen and trident-shaped Lake Panguipulli. Also notable: Lake Puyehue, flanked by Puyehue Volcano (last eruption: 2012) and site of the classic Termas Puyehue Wellness & Spa Resort, with its array of thermal pools.

MAPUCHE WAYS

Two museums showcase the area's indigenous Mapuche culture: the modern Museo Mapuche Pucón, in central Pucón, and the homespun Intercultural Village Center Trawupeyüm, in Curarrehue, where visitors also can try traditional corn bread and sautéed *piñones* at Cocina Mapuche Mapu Lyagl and Cocina de Elisa.

COUNTRY ELEGANCE

Just east of Pucón, the sleekly contemporary Hotel Vira Vira sits in its own “native park” along the clear waters of the Liucura River. Guests can pitch in with chores at a working farm, visit the resort's cheese dairy (which provisions the upscale restaurant), float the river, hike trails, and take art classes.

HUERQUEHUE NATIONAL PARK

Known for its centuries-old araucaria trees, this national park outside Pucón ranges across mountains and forests. A particularly scenic trail: Los Lagos, which winds through ancient groves of larch trees and along blue-water lakes.

ISLE OF RAINBOWS

Southwest of Puerto Varas, off Chile's coast, sits Chiloé, an island of rainbow-haloed hills, fishing villages, and wild wetlands. Sixteen wooden churches here boast World Heritage status for their “fusion of indigenous and European culture.” Equally photogenic are Chiloé's stilt *palafito* houses; you can stay in your own contemporary palafito at the cozily elegant Park Hotel Quilquico.

Germans in the 1800s. You'll come across many German names and establishments—*gasthäuser, bierstuben*. ”

“What would lure Germans halfway around the globe?” I ask.

“The same things that brought my family, lots of open land and natural beauty. We designed our lodge using the vernacular of Patagonia—simple shapes and materials from nature.” His words describe the transformation of things from one reality to another that I'd found in Pucón and Huilo Huilo. They also describe what I'll find the following day, in Frutillar.

“It looks like a ship,” one visitor says to another as I approach the Teatro del Lago, a piece of architectural bravado on Frutillar's quiet lakefront. “To me, it's a modern palace,” says the friend. I see both, though I also see a lighthouse.

“We wanted it to suggest different things,” says Ulrich Bader, the theater's creative director, as he fetches us some coffee in the theater's slyly named Café CapPuccini. A playbill announces a performance by a Brazilian-jazz group—the type of music, I note with some pride, that my son has taken up.

“This has been called one of Chile's most complex buildings,” Bader tells me. “We brought acoustical experts from Europe. Even the seat fabric had to pass acoustical muster.”

German-born Bader and his Chilean wife, Nicola Schiess, president of the Teatro Cultural Corporation, have big plans. “We want to make Frutillar the Salzburg of South America. Nearby is our music school, where local children learn performance arts.”

What he says confirms what I've sensed about this part of Chile: It inspires ambitious visions that honor what has been and look forward to what can be. Which, in a way, is the conversation I've been having with myself about motherhood and my shifting dance with it. As I stroll by Lake Llanquihue, I try to imagine how the place will look as Bader and his wife proceed on the journey of transformation they're clearly passionate about. And I ponder my own journey in this land of volcanic change: Has any transformation taken place in me? Could I consider myself rebooted?

Yes, yes, and how. My walkabout through this lake-dimpled land of volcanoes has gratified my yen for spontaneity, novelty, the extraordinary—and dialed me down to a contented hum.

Gawking at Lake Llanquihue and mist-shawled Osorno Volcano, I invoke the words I saw in Elisa's Mapuche bakery: “*Gracias Madre Tierra*.” Thank you Mother Earth. The ultimate mother of all. I'm ready to go home, and share this with my son.

JAYNE WISE is senior editor at Traveler. Ecuador-based PABLO CORRAL VEGA trains his lens on the cultures of South America.

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AFRICA

IN YOUR
FIFTIES

GO APE IN UGANDA AND RWANDA WITH A NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC EXPLORER.





7 TRIPS • 7 CONTINENTS • 7 DECADES



King of the rain forest,
a gorilla yawns wide in
Rwanda's Volcanoes
National Park.

I remember the first time I looked in the eyes of a great ape in the wild. There was an instant connection, a mutual understanding that I was there not to harm her but to observe her. That particular ape was a chimpanzee named Fifi, who had become famous thanks to a story in *National Geographic* documenting the ground-breaking work of primatologist Jane Goodall. Fifi was lying on her back and using her feet to hold her infant daughter up in the air while she tickled her with her fingers. It was so similar to how human mothers play with their kids that it took my breath away.

This encounter happened at the start of my doctoral research into animal behavior, and I knew right then I wanted to learn everything about how young apes develop. I've spent countless hours in the 17 years since watching apes in the wild.

As a primatologist and a National Geographic emerging explorer, I've accompanied National Geographic Expeditions to Uganda and Rwanda. A featured stop on these "Great Apes" adventures is one of Africa's top primate research sites, Uganda's Kibale Forest National Park, where the staff has habituated a group of wild chimpanzees to the presence of humans. Led by a guide, we walk quietly into the tropical forest listening for chimp "pant hoots," calls the animals make to locate one another. Once we hear a hoot, we follow it, and soon it happens—we see wild chimpanzees. They're curious about us but remain calm. I explain how each chimp is recognizable by individual facial features, size, and fur color. Our guide then shares who is playful, who is dominant, who is serious.

We all are captivated by Kibale's chimps—but three more parks lie ahead, so soon we're off to the next, Uganda's Queen Elizabeth National Park. Framed by the Ruwenzori Mountains, this UNESCO Biosphere Reserve encompasses grasslands, forests, wetlands, and lakes, and is home to more than 90 mammal species. Excursions will include a game drive to spot such classic African animals as antelopes, baboons, and lions (including uncommon tree-climbing lions), and a wildlife-watching cruise along the Kazinga channel, where we'll view hippos and entire families of elephants.

A week into our trip now, we head to one of the most spectacular parks I've visited, Uganda's Bwindi Impenetrable National Park, where we will see one of the rarest animals in the world, the

mountain gorilla. Largest of the great apes, mountain gorillas also are the most endangered: Fewer than a thousand remain.

I always considered myself a "chimp person," but the instant I spotted a mountain gorilla in the wild, I understood what kept legendary American primatologist Dian Fossey out in the rugged forests of East Africa for so many years. Peering into the eyes of these intelligent apes changes you. Suddenly, it becomes clear how precious these, and the planet's other wild creatures, are—and how our world would be a much emptier place without them.

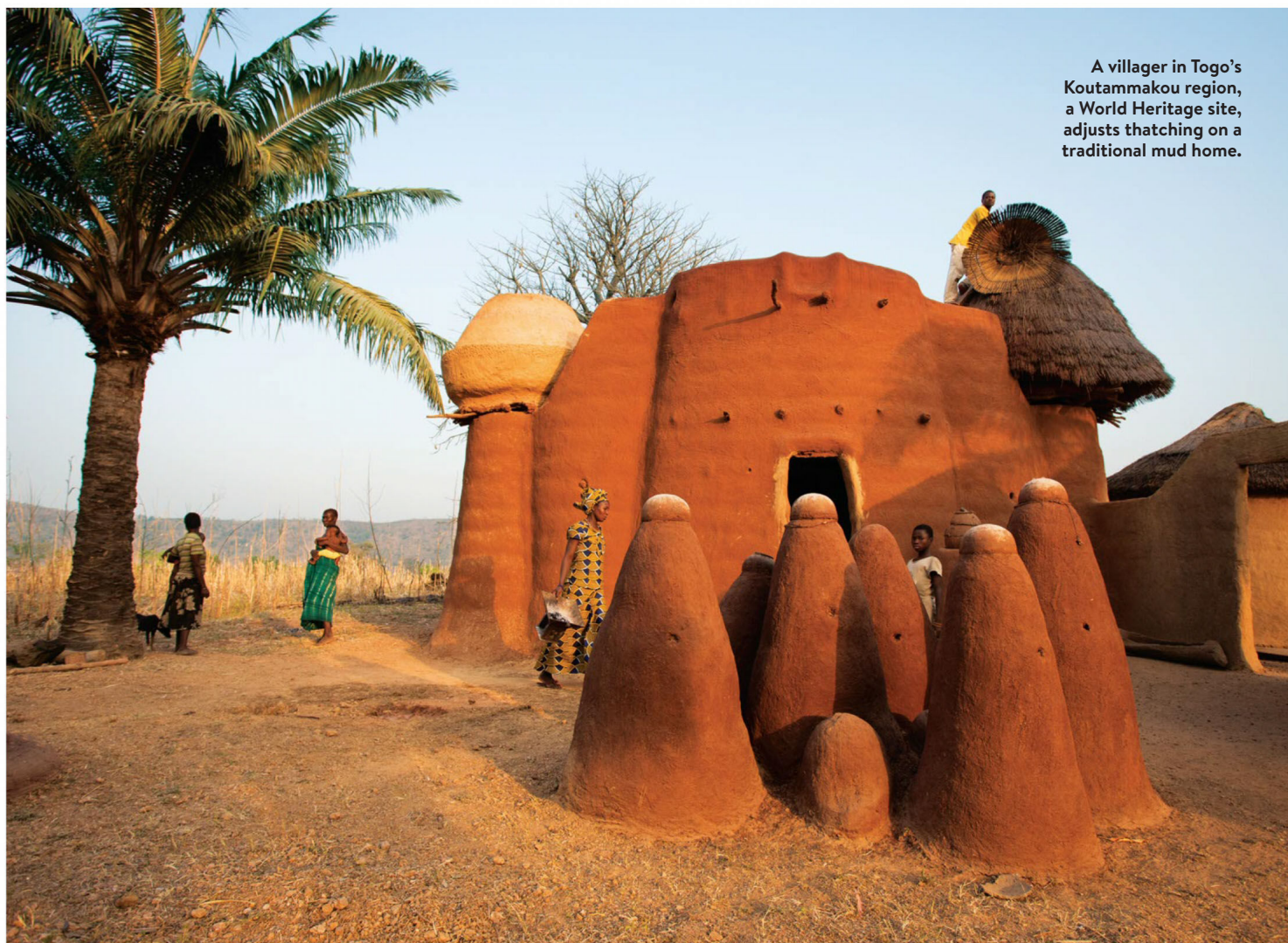
"Entering Bwindi can feel like time traveling," Molly Feltner, a veteran of the Mountain Gorilla Veterinary Project, says. "One moment you're in a landscape dominated by man, the next you're in a scene from the Mesozoic era. Bwindi's rain forest, a labyrinth of ferns and trees, envelops you in green." The plant life is so dense, Feltner notes, that "I've heard and smelled more wildlife there than I've seen. The big exception is the mountain gorilla. If you're willing to climb steep hills and wade through damp undergrowth, Bwindi's habituated mountain gorilla groups will allow you into their world."

Our final destination is Rwanda's Volcanoes National Park, which was made famous by Fossey's research here with mountain gorillas (supported by the National Geographic Society). We gather at park headquarters and divide into groups assigned to one of ten habituated gorilla families. Each group is taken to the trailhead closest to where its family slept the night before (gorillas make new "nests" nightly), and prepares to hike in. The trek will take up to six hours, but nobody minds; we're walking in Fossey's footsteps. Once at the nesting site, we pass our allotted hour mesmerized by the adult gorillas as they eat, rest, and groom while their youngsters romp.

On our return down the mountain, I'll overhear members of my group exclaim about how huge the silverback male was, how adorable the youngsters were, and, if we saw a baby, how amazing it is that such a tiny thing could grow into a silverback. The relatively little time we have passed in the presence of one of Earth's rarest and most majestic animals has made us some of the luckiest people in the world.



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A villager in Togo's Koutammakou region, a World Heritage site, adjusts thatching on a traditional mud home.

Go Deep: Guided Safaris Into the Heart of Africa

KENYA/TANZANIA

Ernest Hemingway is just one of many travelers who have fallen for the epic landscapes and vast wildlife gatherings of East Africa. You may too, on an "Ultimate Kenya & Tanzania Safari" with Natural Habitat Adventures and the World Wildlife Fund. Featured on this classic safari: Serengeti National Park, famed for its migrations of wildebeest and zebras; the grasslands of Masai Mara; and the Lewa Wildlife Conservancy, which began as a rhino sanctuary and today is part of the Mount Kenya World Heritage site. (14 days; from \$15,955; includes local flights) www.nathab.com

ZAMBIA/VICTORIA FALLS

Discover the birthplace of walking safaris in an emerging Africa nature destination: Zambia. African Safari Consultants' "Victoria Falls and Zambian Big Game Safari" starts at one of Earth's largest waterfalls; the nearby Mosi-oa-Tunya National Park is home to elephants, giraffes, and impalas. You're then whisked to South Luangwa National Park, where you have the chance to see leopards, hippos, eagles, and more. Spend your final nights at Lower Zambezi National Park, a hidden wilderness along the Zambezi River. (10 days; \$8,390; includes local flights) www.africansafaris.com

GHANA/TOGO/BENIN

West Africa may not have remarkable congregations of wild animals, but it more than makes up for that absence with its cultural and historical attractions. Introduce yourself to its mud-built villages, ethnic markets, and rich artistic traditions on a "Cultural Vacation in Ghana, Togo and Benin" with Responsible Travel. Featured highlights: a visit to a Togo stilt village; the Temple of Pythons in Benin, where pythons are venerated; and Ghana's Royal Palace Museum, for its exhibits of gold jewelry. (12 days; from \$2,806; excludes flights) www.responsiblevacation.com



ANTARCTICA

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LIFETIME

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A frozen crown of
an iceberg rides the
polar waters around
Antarctica.



7 TRIPS • 7 CONTINENTS • 7 DECADES



“**T**owering mountains rise straight out of ice-clogged seas, icebergs gleam the radiant blue that only ancient ice attains, wildlife congregates in multitudes. In Antarctica, you see things clearly,” says photographer Jim Richardson, whose decades of travel have taken him twice to the white continent. If Antarctica is a destination for clear visions, its tourism visionary was Lars-Eric Lindblad, who pioneered travel to this icy realm 50 years ago. In 1966, the Swede brought 57 goose-down-bundled passengers on a dream cruise to the ends of the Earth. In the years since, Lindblad Expeditions has pioneered sustainable Antarctic journeys, often in partnership with National Geographic. *Traveler* tracked down **Sven-Olof Lindblad**, the founder’s son, to learn why the world’s coldest continent is our hottest ultimate destination.

Why is Antarctica the ultimate trip for those in their seventh decade? Seventh decade, seventh continent. Antarctica simply can’t be missed by any traveler driven by curiosity and attracted to 21st-century exploration. This is the wildest, most dramatic place on Earth. Be prepared for constant surprise.

What always impresses first-time travelers on your Antarctica expeditions? The endless beauty and wonder of ice—enormous glaciers, icebergs, ice sheets. Also, the constantly changing light as it illuminates the vastness of this place.

What should travelers expect? Antarctica is dramatic and nuanced at the same time. At first it’s overwhelming, but as days progress, the nuances come into play; the shapes and colors of icebergs, the antics of penguins, the pods of whales.

Share with us some of your impressions of Antarctica. Its palette of whites, blues, and blacks. How nature dictates everything there and human influence is so minor. The miles and miles of ice; on my first visit, I didn’t sleep for two days, I was so mesmerized as we crashed through sea ice.

How has travel to Antarctica changed since your father inaugurated trips to the ultimate continent? When my father began bringing people to Antarctica, no one went there. Now, many people go, on all manner of ships. In terms of the guest



Gentoo penguins charmed photographer Jim Richardson during one of his National Geographic Expeditions trips to the Antarctic region.

experience, it’s better now because of advanced technologies to predict weather and ice conditions. In our case, we have hydrophones and ROVs (remotely operated underwater vehicles). We also have “undersea specialists,” who take videos of underwater life during the trip for guests to enjoy.

What camera gear should travelers bring to make the most of their Antarctic experience? Whatever camera is comfortable, but understand the camera you choose. Of course, on our ships we have photo instructors—including National Geographic photographers—to help everyone maximize their equipment.

Name one of your favorite Antarctic experiences. I love watching the goings-on in penguin colonies: their courtships, how they raise their young, their strategies to avoid leopard seals.



What do you expect for Antarctic travel in the coming decades? A continued growth in interest, with one possible challenge: how to offer a remarkable Antarctic experience to more and more travelers—and do it safely.

What do you want travelers to return from Antarctica with? Above all, I want them to have unforgettable, knock-your-socks-off experiences that enhance their respect for wild places—and for the importance of these places to life on Earth.

HONORING CONSERVATION AND SUSTAINABLE TOURISM



5th ANNUAL LEADER IN SUSTAINABLE TOURISM AWARD

To honor excellence in travel marketing, National Geographic Traveler and the Hospitality Sales and Marketing Association International have once again teamed up to recognize and honor companies for their leadership and innovation in preserving and communicating an authentic sense of place—including the environment, culture, and historic integrity—through, tourism campaigns.

Wilderness Safaris Platinum Winner

Wilderness Safaris works closely with the governments of Botswana, South Africa, and Zimbabwe, to reintroduce the black and white rhino into the wild and save this disappearing prehistoric species as well as hyenas, cheetahs and vultures. Their conservation work makes a positive

difference in the lives of rural communities and inspires other tour operators to promote environmental education and transform the business of tourism.

Mountain Lodges of Peru Gold Winner

This family-owned adventure travel operator offers authentic, cultural immersive experiences to promote sustainable tourism. By training local residents to produce textiles, jams, honey and organic coffee, Mountain Lodges of Peru provides opportunity for economic advancement.

Fairmont Hotels & Resorts Gold Winner

This luxury hotel brand is the first to develop a honeybee program to provide wild bee habitats in urban areas. Partnering with Burt's Bees, Fairmont Hotels and Resorts installed over 20 bee hotels across Canada. A guest education component

informs visitors about the importance of bees in a sustainable food system.

Congratulations to this year's winners

who were presented at HSMAI's annual Adrian Awards at the New York Marriott Marquis on February 16, 2016.



Pictured from left to right: Fran Brasseux, Executive VP, HSMAI; George Stone, Editor, National Geographic Traveler; Tim Farrell, Wilderness Safaris; Anne-Cecile Blanchot, Hawkins International Public Relations.

National Geographic Traveler recognizes leaders
in sustainable tourism for 2016

By Costas Christ

The Cliffs of Moher,
a top sight in Ireland,
belong to UNESCO's
Geopark network.



WORLD LEGACY AWARDS

More than 100 entries were submitted from 51 countries. A global panel of 23 judges, coordinated by editor at large Costas Christ, scored the entries according to internationally recognized criteria for sustainable tourism. Also considered: innovation, visitor activities, and quality of service. The 15 finalists underwent a rigorous on-site inspection. One winner was selected in each category. Partners and sponsors include ITB Berlin, the Botswana Tourism Organization, Adventure World, and the TreadRight Foundation.

“ Tourism is like fire.

Out of control, it can burn your house down. But if you harness that energy, you can cook your food with it.” With those words, we launched the World Legacy Awards in 2002. Our goal was a simple one: Applaud, support, and raise the bar for nations and travel companies in the vanguard of sustainable tourism, at the time an emerging concept based on safeguarding the world’s natural and cultural treasures for future generations. Those early ideas gave rise to a travel philosophy that continues to redefine how we explore the planet. Among the initiatives recognized in these profiles of the 2016 winners are a grassroots organization that is empowering village women as conservation leaders and a Maori tour company that is helping travelers understand New Zealand’s indigenous heritage. Our winners prove that a great holiday also can make the world a better place.

■ TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE AWARDS:
[WWW.NATIONALGEOGRAPHIC.COM/
 WORLDFLEGACYAWARDS](http://WWW.NATIONALGEOGRAPHIC.COM/WORLDFLEGACYAWARDS)

Destination Leadership

Places that demonstrate environmental, cultural, and community best practices

**WINNER: BURREN AND CLIFFS
 OF MOHER GEOPARK, IRELAND**

It’s a common problem in many parts of the rural world: Once thriving villages become economic backwaters as business opportunities shift from the countryside to urban centers. That’s what the project known as the Burren and Cliffs of Moher GeoparkLIFE set out to change in County Clare, on Ireland’s Atlantic coast, a place dotted with farms, villages, and walking trails. “By developing a destination-wide partnership with the Burren Ecotourism Network, we’re bringing communities, businesses, and municipal authorities together to create a sustainable future for our rural way of life,” says Geopark manager Carol Gleeson, who grew up on a nearby farm. Key to the project’s success: ensuring that the Cliffs of Moher, soaring 650 feet above crashing waves, are not just photo ops for day-trippers. Attractions such as the Burren Outdoor Activity Trail and the Burren Food Trail—featuring food producers and culinary artisans, and a winner of a 2015 European Destination of Excellence award for local gastronomy—now have more travelers spending more time in this scenic region.

www.burrengeopark.ie



Neolithic tombs in the rugged Burren

RUNNERS-UP

- Destination Røros, Norway
- Travel Oregon, U.S.A.

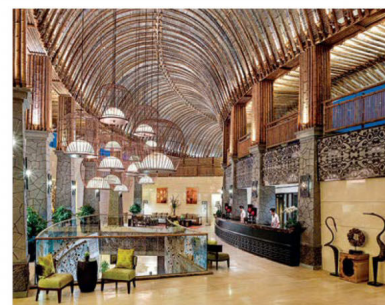
Earth Changers

Leadership in environmentally friendly business practices and technologies

**WINNER: MISSION HILLS RESORTS,
 CHINA**

Among China’s city dwellers, they’re called “breathers”—vacations focused on nature and clean air. Mission Hills offers both at its three resort complexes. “We want to be the positive change in China that we believe is needed for a greener future,” says Ken Chu, the young chairman of Mission Hills, who is part of a growing Chinese environmental movement. The flagship property, Mission Hills Haikou, on the tropical island of Hainan, features ten golf courses certified by the Golf Environmental Organization, stands of lychee trees that golden birdwings (China’s largest butterfly) call home, an Eco-Heritage Trail that meanders past a 300-year-old archaeological site, and an Eco-Diversity Trail featuring native species. Also here: a high-tech field station that monitors air quality and climate-change impacts, and more than 50,000 native trees transplanted to help restore a deforested ecosystem. Other Mission Hills highlights include Eco-Learning Centers promoting awareness of biodiversity, and a Green Manual for guests with suggestions on how to live a more sustainable life at home.

www.missionhillschina.com



A lobby at the Mission Hills Haikou resort

RUNNERS-UP

- Laguna Lodge Eco-Resort and Nature Reserve, Guatemala
- Inspira Santa Marta Hotel, Portugal

Engaging Communities

Promoting economic and social benefits that directly improve local livelihoods

WINNER: THE BUSHCAMP COMPANY, ZAMBIA

One of the most important lessons to emerge from decades of conservation in Africa is that unless the people who live closest to wildlife become allies in protecting endangered species, lasting conservation is elusive. Enter the Bushcamp Company, which operates Mfuwe Lodge and six safari camps in South Luangwa National Park, a vast haven offering some of the continent's most spectacular wildlife experiences. "Tourism plays a huge role in protecting nature in Zambia," says managing director Andy Hogg. "We do that by working with villagers to provide jobs, build schools, and improve rural livelihoods." Bushcamp, the area's largest employer, pumps more than \$300,000 yearly into conservation and community development, including on-the-job training, scholarships for 350 students, 3,000 anti-malaria bed nets, and a daily meal for 1,600 schoolchildren (within a year their exam pass rate rose from 53 percent to 91 percent as teachers reported increased attendance). Bushcamp also donates funds to the South Luangwa Conservation Society to support its anti-poaching patrols. www.bushcampcompany.com



Mfuwe Lodge mascots: local elephants

RUNNERS-UP

- Grootbos Green Futures Foundation, South Africa
- Abercrombie & Kent Philanthropy, U.S.A.

Sense of Place

Excellence in enhancing sense of place and authenticity; support for indigenous traditions

WINNER: TIME UNLIMITED TOURS, NEW ZEALAND

The best way to understand indigenous culture is to travel with companies owned by indigenous people. Meet Ceillhe Tewhare Teneti Hema Sperath, who, with her husband, Neill, founded TIME Unlimited Tours in 2005. The name is an acronym for the company mission, To Integrate Maori Experiences, says Sperath, herself a descendant of two Maori chiefs who signed the 1840 Treaty of Waitangi, New Zealand's founding document. "It is very important for us to represent the intergenerational vision our ancestors had to be the *kaitiaki* [guardians] of this special place we call Aotearoa, also known as New Zealand," she explains. The Speraths want to share Maori culture through personalized journeys in New Zealand's mystical landscapes, including the Waitakare Ranges and Rotorua's geothermal pools and geysers. Their approach has earned TIME Unlimited the country's highest certification for environmental and social responsibility. "We create experiences that help travelers understand our tribal legends as living legacies," Sperath says, "a sense of place we call home."

www.newzealandtours.travel



A steam-filled thermal pool in Rotorua

RUNNERS-UP

- CGH Earth Experience Hotels, India
- Tierra Patagonia Hotel & Spa, Chile

Conserving the Natural World

Preserving nature, restoring habitats, and protecting rare and endangered species

WINNER: GRUPO ECOLÓGICO SIERRA GORDA, MEXICO

For 29 years Grupo Ecológico Sierra Gorda, a grassroots nonprofit organization, has worked to protect one of the world's loftier biodiversity enclaves—the Sierra Gorda, a lush mountain region some four hours' drive north from Mexico City—by building a "conservation economy." Much of what the group does "focuses on improving the daily lives of women, so that they become the voice of conservation in their communities," says Martha Isabel Ruiz Corzo, the director. "This has created a network of 83 small ecotourism businesses, many led by village women who previously struggled in poverty." Grupo Ecológico Sierra Gorda also aided the establishment of the 950,000-acre Sierra Gorda Biosphere Reserve, home to diverse ecosystems—including Cuatro Palos, where forest and desert meet, and Sótano del Barro, a massive sinkhole where endangered macaws nest—as well as the Franciscan Missions World Heritage site. Travelers see the conservation economy at work among local outfitters offering hiking and other excursions, and artisans such as Doña Dorotea, who runs a pottery studio.

www.sierragorda.net



Ceramics made by Sierra Gorda women

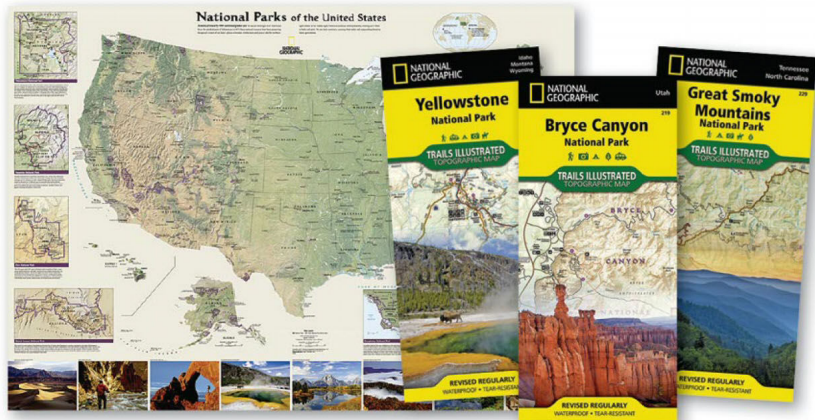
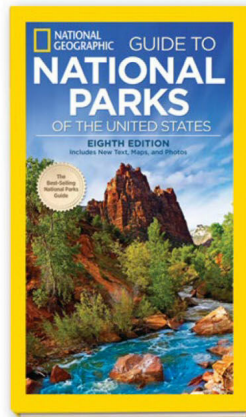
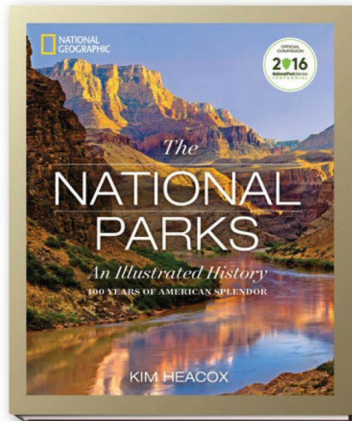
RUNNERS-UP

- Arkaba by Wild Bush Luxury, Australia
- Elephant Hills Company Ltd., Thailand

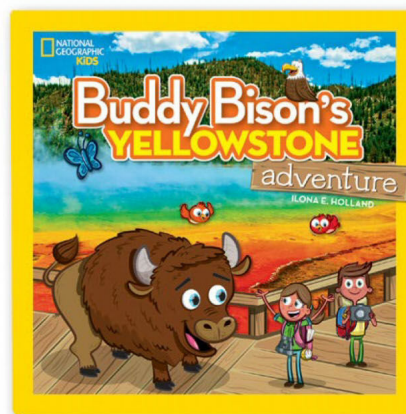
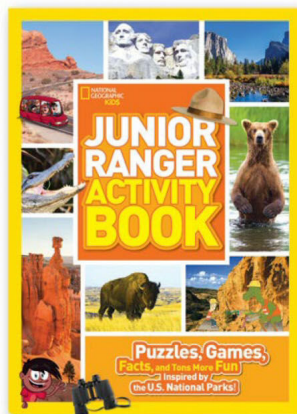
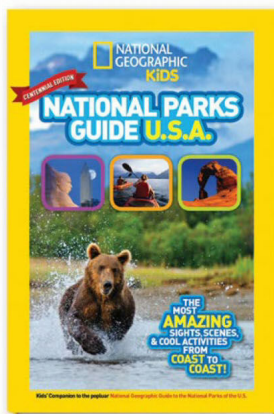
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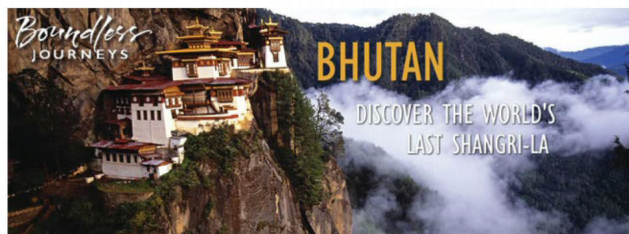


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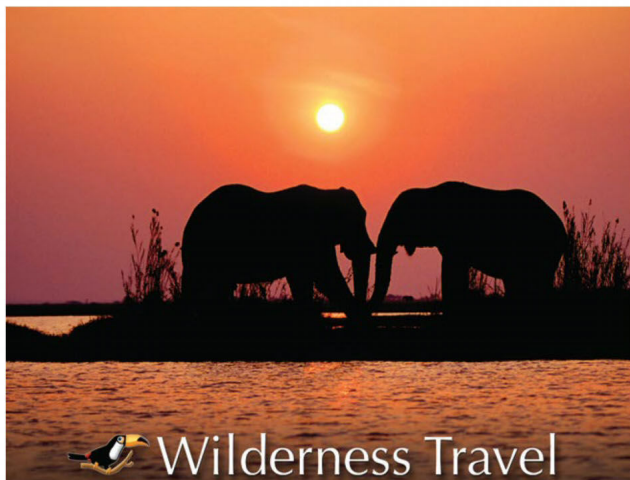
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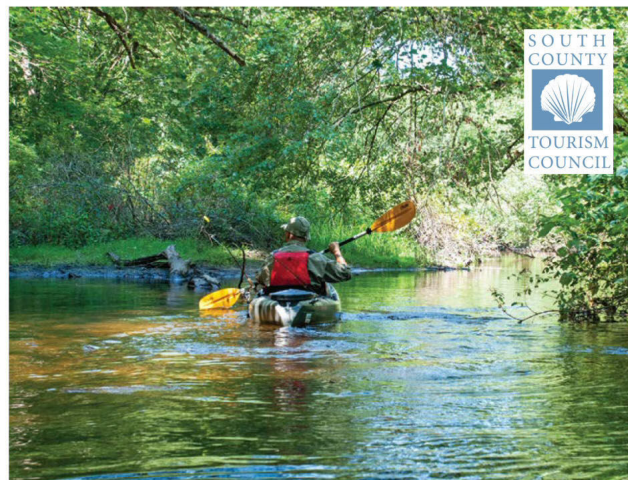


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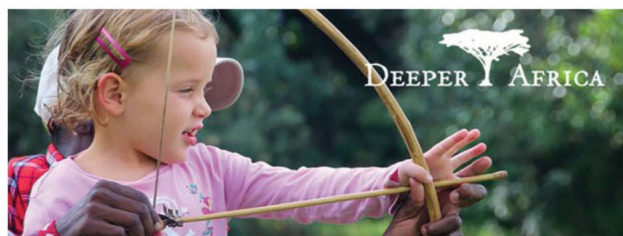


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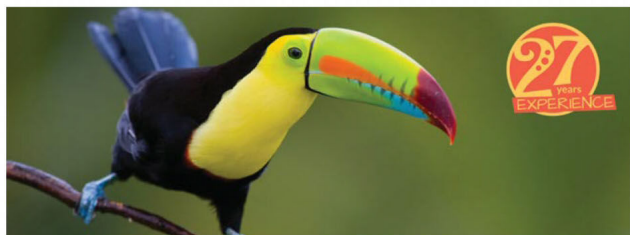
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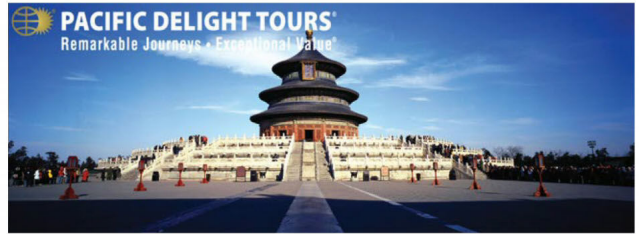
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